

# THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

OCTOBER, 1915

## BLACK SHEEP<sup>1</sup>

### I THE MAIL FROM THE BUSH

BY JEAN KENYON MACKENZIE

[FOR five decades the Presbyterian Church in America has maintained a mission on the West Coast of Africa. From its original occupancy along the coast of what became, with the partition of Africa, the French Congo, Spanish Guinea, and the German colony of Kamerun, this mission has gone inland from the coast of southern Kamerun.

The station in Gaboon, of which mention is made in these letters, is now under the care of the French Protestant Society at work in the French Congo.

The ten years preceding the present war were a season of great activity and success in African missions. The Presbyterian mission in Southern Kamerun shared with its French neighbors to the south and its German neighbors to the north in the encouragements of this epoch. There was a tumult of development. The forest tribes and the tribes by the sea crowded into the tribe of God, — and under black leaders: in the past decade the black men with whom the white missionary shares his burdens have increased at the rate of eight

to one. Under the thatched roofs of the churches gather, here and there in the forest, Sabbath congregations of six thousand, of eight thousand. Self-support is a major intention; and in the year before the war the thirty thousand adherents of this mission gave, out of their primitive circumstance, nearly fifteen thousand dollars to the treasury. There was a large industrial plant at Elat; there were more than ten thousand pupils in the schools; there was a beneficent medical work at four stations. The clamor of the drums at unnumbered villages called the young to school of a week day, and broke the dark before the dawn of a Sunday with the call to 'gather.'

So much for the days before the war in a neighborhood which has been, since the war began, a battlefield.]

LIVERPOOL, June 30.

Now surely you would know that I am off to West Africa. My circumstance reeks of it. My room smells of the rubber that is to keep me dry. My shining tin trunks and my traveling bed mark me missionary or government.

<sup>1</sup> These are actual letters written from Africa by an American missionary. — THE EDITORS.

S.S. SOKOTO, *July 10.*

It is late afternoon of one of our monotonous bright days. We sail always south toward a horizon of summer clouds that we never overtake; sometimes we pass dreary-looking steamers making their journey north, and sometimes lovely lady ships. One to-day, a four-masted bark with every sail set and as white in the sun as Hubert's stag in the forest, made us feel the mean vessel that we are.

Near by, but where he cannot see me, the chief engineer leans his long young body over the rail and talks to the stewardess in tones of the utmost cynicism about missionaries.

*July 15.*

Yesterday we called at Monrovia and this morning at another town. Monrovia makes quite a showing of clustered European houses, but the town at which we called to-day showed only native huts, gray and squat. We lie off shore; this is all open sea beach. All day we make along the coast; the stain of it is all day on the eastern rim of the bright circumference of the sea. Sometimes our course lies well in shore; then we feel the land-swell, we see the white line of the inevitable surf, and back of this, the wall of the forest with its higher trees rising on bare trunks, a scanty and fernlike foliage. There is a level light of afternoon that picks out to an extraordinary degree the detail of this forest and drenches it in green.

The coast line is for the most part low. The water hereabouts varies in color, — gray, sometimes green, once emerald with amber in the lights. Once we came to anchor in jade. To-day the Kroos came about the ship in their canoes, brown bodies in brown canoes, all wet with the sea and struck with violet lights. They came up the ship's side and took passage as crew boys; it is they who will handle the cargo when we come to discharge it.

*July 19.*

Past Axim, Secondi, Accra, and Lagos, and always beauty to hold the eye. From every settlement there come out to the ship boats manned by strapping black men who sit on the gunwales as a woman rides a horse, six on a side, each with a short paddle that is a trident, my dears, like Neptune's. They lean to the water in unison. In the stern stands the helmsman, his loin cloth blowing about him, and the effect of all this is not just primitive, it is classic.

Many of the Africans wear a garment like the toga. I look at a row of them leaning over the rail (for our lower decks fore and aft are crowded with black passengers now) — I see them leaning looking out to sea with so much about them, in dress and gesture, of the Romans.

Among them are others: Mohammedans, effeminate-looking young fellows as easily distinguished by their hauteur as by their dress; and their dress is fine, — handwoven stuffs in stripes, lemon yellows striped in lavender, or tawny yellows striped in bronze.

*July 21.*

To-day I got off the ship and walked in Africa, my friends, and it smelt like a hothouse. This is Old Calabar. The government building and the mission building are on a hill that slopes to the river; the native town falls into a hollow and climbs half way up the next hill. I took a photograph, but you will never see from that how the mammoth trees father the little brown huts.

*July 23.*

We had tea with some Scotch missionaries, all set about with Rossetti on the shelves and on the walls, and we had good things to eat. But the little girl-wife thinks Old Calabar a pretty severe field, for here, she says, the natives are semi-civilized and vicious.

She envies us going into the bush. And indeed so do I. I mean I would n't change with her for anything.

BATANGA, KAMERUN, *July 31.*

This is the receiving port for our mission, and we landed yesterday at sunset. Here the ship lies about three miles off the coast, and we had to go ashore in a surf-boat. I never went anywhere in a surf-boat, and I must say, when I saw them begin to hand the babies from the ladder to that intoxicated surf-boat, I felt sick of the sea. You get into the boat any way you can. Presently we were all sitting where we had dropped, and we pulled away from the ship. The evening was golden, but the sea was pretty rough, and no one looked much at the scenery. There were five rowers on a side, and they were, it seems, very skillful in their management of the boat. But this was lost on me, and on my word of honor, when I saw the tremendous surf, and the boat came broadside to wait the next wave, I began to take off my mackintosh. I thought we would end in the sea. But before I could get free of my coat the boat headed for shore, ran up a mountain and down, and hard on the sand. Back again with the return of the water into the turmoil; but when the next wave carried us ashore again, natives ran into the surf to her prow and held her against the return, while others picked agitated missionaries off the sides. Mrs. Lehman had said to me, 'Don't fight the native when he comes for you as we land.' Fight him! I literally fell on his neck and embraced him all the way to dry land.

I never saw anything more tragic than the faces of the mothers watching their little ones being carried through the surf.

Yesterday our people — fifty carriers — came in from the bush. They came to shake hands with the new mis-

sionary, and looked at her gravely. There is at first something disquieting about their unsmiling regard, but presently one knows it to be friendly. Four of these men will carry my hammock, in relays of two; we shall be four nights on the road.

LOLODORF, KAMERUN,  
*Friday, August 12.*

We left Batanga Monday morning at seven, and got into Lolodorf on Thursday at four in the afternoon. This means that we walked twenty miles each day and twenty-two the last day. I don't mean that I walked all the way: I had four hammock-carriers, but hammock-carriers reach their limit, and there are many steep places along the road; so I walked perhaps half the way, and yesterday I must have pegged along fourteen miles.

There are different sensations for different hours of the day on the road. There is the miserable 4.30 A.M. sensation. You are asked to get up, and the cot is snatched from under you. You start to wash and the basin is whisked off. Presently you sit down to breakfast by the light of a lantern, and as you eat, day breaks; well, you feel better. And when at six o'clock you take the road, in the dawn and the dew, it is heavenly. And so it is heavenly all day, in and out of the hammock, swaying along a level path, or panting up an incline, in the forest or under the open sky, sunk in a valley with your road suspended behind you and before, or on some hilltop, with the mountains for your betters. In four days I saw more beauty than in all my life before. So the morning passes gloriously. And at noon in the palaver house of some town you sit on a pole bed, or a sort of bamboo couch, with your knees up to your chin, and eat what your native cook has brought in the chop-box, and it is good. You are ready for the road again. But by three o'clock you droop. At

four you limp and drag. When you come to the native town where the tent is to be pitched, you sit on the ground until your men set up the camp-chairs, and after that, too, for you are too weary to move. Somehow you get to bed, and then it is 4.30 A.M.

All your meals, your uprisings and your downittings, are witnessed and commented upon by all the natives in the town. I suppose they stand outside the tent and listen to us breathe. The tent is always pitched in the centre of the town. In the morning Dr. Lehman paid our debts for water and vegetables when any had been bought, and our currency is matches or fishhooks or needles, — needles are especially acceptable.

The forest is not lonely. There is a continual line of carriers coming from the east with ivory and rubber, — big men from Yaunde or Bene, fine physically, and just as untutored as you can conceive; indeed more so than I could have conceived. Happily they speak Bulu, so I shall be able to talk to them some day. The last day on the road it poured rain, the beginning of the rainy season. You can imagine struggling up hills and sliding down, 'and when we came to greasy ground we split ourselves in two.' At four o'clock we arrived at Lolodorf. The native pastor, Ndenga, who had been left in charge of the station, had opened the house for us.

This is a beautiful place. Everywhere you look you see a detached hill that is a young mountain and every little mountain is dressed in tropical opulence. Lolodorf is a military post; the fortifications are on an abrupt hill near by. The mission itself is on the land that rises from the river and is bounded by the river on the west and north. South of us runs the road. The station consists of two dwelling-houses, a church in which school meets as well,

and between six and eight workhouses, toolhouses, or what not. The houses are all built bush-fashion — saplings set up for stanchions about three feet apart. The walls, of bark, — great sheets of brown bark, slatted horizontally with strips of bamboo, — are sewed to the stanchions with a rattan thread. No nails are used in the entire house; everything is sewed or tied with 'bush rope' as I tell you. You can see daylight through the punctures and sometimes through the splits in the bark. The roof is a thatch of palm leaves, and the eaves are low. We are very cosy and look Elizabethan.

At this station there are the Lehmans; Ndenga, a native pastor from the beach, who has done very well by the work during the Lehmans' absence; myself, and the Rev. Mr. Heminger, who is due from Elat any day. The regular school work has not been taken up as yet; we are just getting the station in order.

The people here are largely Ngumba and Yaunde. These latter have been brought up by the government from the interior; the Yaunde are the carrier tribe, they and the Bene. In carrying to the beach, hundreds of carriers in the week sleep here. The mission has a palaver house for their benefit, and one of the most interesting opportunities is offered by this transient audience, a people absolutely virgin. There are dwarfs in this neighborhood, too, serfs of the Ngumba. Dr. Lehman journeys among them and we get them in the school.

I am to learn Bulu; the Ngumba and the Yaunde understand it, though it is not theirs. The Fang understand it, and it is the best thing to learn, since my ultimate station is uncertain.

*August 12.*

High above us looms the government hill, where three Germans live.



The senior officer, a lieutenant, came to make his call on Sunday, and told me that he already felt well acquainted with me, as indeed I should think he might, since he had informed himself by document as to the age and condition, intent, and station of Missionar Schwester Mackenzie. After making this hopeful statement he became terribly embarrassed and went away. I was so sorry, for I had some impertinent questions to ask him, with a view to acquaintance.

There is a strange beauty about these people, especially the Yaunde and the Bene, — a beauty of body and of posture, of color and of draping. A thousand things would remind you of the art of the Renaissance. The way they dress their heads is so often like Botticelli. They have a surprising instinct for decoration; often the tattoo is a single figure on one side of the face, and their hair is dressed with no superstitious regard for the middle of their foreheads.

LOLODORF, August 26.

Oh, you dears, to write me so!

Some belated carriers have brought mail. I feel as lavish as Ahasuerus when Esther entertained him — you shall have half of my kingdom. Dear me, I see your embarrassment when my retainer makes good. My kingdom is Bitum, in the trousers I helped him make, and in no shirt at all if you insist on immediate delivery, for he is washing his shirt to-day. Which half will you have? I suppose you will be selfish and take the dressed half. He came to me this morning with a most virtuous air; he was going to wash his shirt! 'Good,' cried I, with enthusiasm. But where, he begged to know, was he going to get soap? I suppose this appears to you fair enough, but there is a root of evil. I asked of Mrs. Lehman, 'May n't I give him soap this once?' 'Well, if you do, tell him that he is not

to have soap again; that he is to buy it out of his wages.' I looked at Mrs. Lehman and wondered. Did she forget her first struggle with the Bulu language?

September 1.

There is no organized church here, but the people are moving that way. On a Sunday there will be some four hundred of an audience, — more brown arms and legs, closer packed, than the church was built to hold. Every day people come to make confession of faith and to be received into the class for instruction. This initial step is a long one; you step out of your tribe and its custom into the tribe of God and its custom. But you clean up your record before the transfer is effected; you pay your debts, you settle your quarrels, you confess your misdeeds to your husband, and you suffer, often enough, your beatings.

There are Macedonian signals from a town about twenty miles from here, Nshicko's town; he is the headman. Nshicko is middle-aged. He, with several men like himself, well-to-do, was converted. Each put away all his wives but one, — and superfluous wives mean property; they formed the bulk of these men's possessions, — and they entered school here. This was before the Lehman's furlough. This last year the men have spent in their town, where they have told their people 'the news.' Now they come to us for help; sixty of their townspeople believe. I wish you might have been with us the night this deputation waited on us as we sat about the lamp, — three middle-aged men, two of them with loin cloths, the other in a white nightshirt. This last was an old man, silent and mild, with a droop half patient and half sad, and a sort of austere mysticism that quite awed me.

We are short-handed here, but we have sent Ndenga to Nshicko's town,

where he will start a school and preach.

Now I study Bulu and teach the primary class in a school. Some of you smile at this and so do I, but not all the time. I have over seventy pupils, some young ones and some grown men and women, — poor long-legged men who sit patiently through the morning while I explain with a chart and a pointer the difference between *e* with an accent and without. It is my aim and my passion to keep the grown people up with the children. I can't tell whether this is the fruit of compassion or of the natural enmity between one generation and the next. There is a man called Zambe, and I mean that he shall read if it is to be done by sheer will.

LOLODORF, September 8.

I realized the other day that I am not giving you much sense of the externals of 'Life in Africa.' Too bad, for they are understood to be so thrilling. Truly I could write you a thriller if I saw things in a certain light. The other evening I was talking with Mrs. Lehman, and we agreed that we could get up a very moving account of our affairs. It would read like this: —

A missionary, his wife, and two children live in one room of a three-roomed house. They eat, read, and work in one room, in company with a single woman missionary, who occupies the third room. The walls of the house are made of sheets of bark, which are split here and there so that the sun's rays penetrate in swaths of light which threaten the life and reason of the missionaries. Moreover, the roof, which is made of palm-leaf thatch, has given way here and there, so that in the rainy season the water falls into the soup and on the heads of the missionaries. (On the head of the little single missionary — think of it, she who never liked to get her head wet!) When it rains, the sheep and the goats take refuge under the

house, and at night these heathen beasts clamor. When the single missionary puts her hand into her wall pocket to pull out a handkerchief (an innocent luxury which she allows herself), she pulls out a cockroach as big as a mouse — and so on, horrors upon horrors. But I spare you.

This is the wet season, one of them. Every afternoon it rains terrifically. Long before the rain booms upon the roof the rush of it may be heard in the forest, and there, among the great trees, the gray army advances. When it has passed and the sun comes out, the heat is pretty severe.

Sunday, September 11.

Yesterday I took to myself and went for a long walk. I meant to say to Bitum, 'I will walk presently.' I said something in Bulu, very proudly. Afterwards Mrs. Lehman explained to me, between her laughs, that I had asked to walk in hell. (Dear Margaret, it was their own hades, that they manufactured for their primitive uses before ever the missionary appeared on the scene.) Small wonder that Bitum had looked at me oddly, shaking his head. I suppose he thought it was time to call a halt.

September 12.

Already these hills are less strange and this forest — I know the secret of many paths and shall soon know all. A country and a circumstance are soon familiar; only people are perpetually mysterious. I thought about this so much to-day when I was plodding along in the mud, the hills about me blue with evening, and we passed some carriers, — Yaunde women, nude but for leaves, and beautifully formed, as so many Yaunde women are. The carrying of loads does not encourage sight-seeing, and by the day's end the eyes of a carrier don't wander far from the path; so these women were passing me,

heads down. But I spoke the word of greeting and they looked up. Their eyes met mine. Ah, how far away the dim islands of their entity, and between us what expanse of 'unplumbed, salt, estranging sea'! Often, in meeting such women, I am conscious that a word has passed between us. They go on, I believe from my heart, not ungreeted. But our intercourse is hardly what might be called genial. It is very oppressively sad; there never was one that smiled at me. And truly youth seems most desolate; the younger the girl the more morose her gaze. Perhaps the capacity for pain is the essential jewel of Yaunde youth. The Ngumba people seem much less tragic.

*September 15.*

To-night I was reading about Stanley's search for Livingston, when suddenly I asked myself, 'Am I really in the country of which he writes?' I went to the window to look out, to see, my dears, if I were. It was raining heavily, but for all that the moonlight penetrated the clouds and fell with a most impartial ray and no glamour. There were the wan paths leading from little gray huts to little gray huts; there were the innumerable banners of the plantain trees, and the slim, upstanding pawpaws, and beyond these the great columns of the trees of the forest, all patient under the vehement rain. And I knew perfectly, and for the first time, that I am in Africa.

Nowadays during half of the school hours I teach several classes in the primer. Zambe has graduated to the primer and reads, with inexplicable pauses and with strange agitations of his arms and legs, sentences of three words each. Always his eyes plead with me not to desert him in this adventurous country of learning. Do you know, I am happy in this: that all these people are real and individual. One is clever, another is

stupid; another's lips, when he recites, tremble with trepidation; another, bless her little heart, has a little frightened pulse that throbs in her neck when she grapples with the chart. Who could resist such allurements, such weaknesses, such eagerness?

*October 3.*

To-day on the road I saw a woman so small, so perfect, so black, and so comely that I looked at her with wonder. She walked with her arms folded, before a big carrier. She wore a leaf bandage supported by a crimson strap which held in place low on her back one of those curious bustles which are the pride of the people from the interior, — a thick even glossy bunch of dried grass that looks like black horse-hair, and is jaunty to a degree. Her dark skin was in perfect condition; her beautiful slender limbs moved with elastic decision; above her slim shoulders her head was poised with a sort of nervous pride; and her hair was charmingly and elaborately dressed. Fairly she seemed to glitter in the sunlight.

*LOLODORF, October 4.*

The other evening as I sat writing there came from outside a sound of vehement voices. So I went out into the night, where the moonlight lay broad and even on the paths and on the banners of the plantain trees and on the little thatched church. The noise came from the dark interior of the church, through its doors and windows, which are never closed, lacking the where-withal. Presently Mrs. Lehman called to me from the house that Ngya, one of the early converts, was in the church talking to a company of carriers; and then I could distinguish his voice, urgent and rapid in the languid night, and the occasional unanimous response of the carriers. 'You have understood?' he would ask. 'We have under-

stood!' they would roar in concert. Standing there, listening, I wished that you might hear too.

On Sunday, at the women's meeting, some twenty carriers strolled in and sat back against the bark wall, where they presented a great array of arms and legs. Mrs. Lehman told the women of that illuminating quarrel between Abraham and Lot, — we were sure of the carriers during that time, for these people respond readily to the Old Testament. At the close of the service the rain hindered our return to the house, and while we waited for the storm to pass, Mrs. Lehman played on the little organ. Presently there was about her a wall of great strapping carriers, so pleased with the magic of the keys, and with the brightness of her hair, that they looked at one and the other smiling. They had never heard the word of God before, and they turned their faces on Mrs. Lehman with a sort of animal innocence, — such an unwinking, amazed interest as I could hardly have imagined as human, though I have seen horses look so before they were broken. Then such huddlings together, such linkings of arms, such leanings of friend against friend, such exclamations one to the other in their virile ungoverned voices, such sudden laughs of jocund wonder. 'Zambe, he who created us is not one to endure fetish! Is that a true word?' — and they laughed.

So Mrs. Lehman talked to them and I looked at them till the rain had moderated — and we were going. But one thing they must know — what was that fruit? pointing to the revolving globe. Then they were told how the earth is round, and all the rest of that unlikely legend of its relation to the sun. So we left them, and they went on their way in that new world which is round, and was made by a God who rejects medicine (fetish). They may pass this way again.

It will be Thanksgiving season at home, when you read this, and so it will be with us. The other Sunday Mrs. Lehman held a Thanksgiving service with the women; they were to tell of the mercies they had enjoyed during the past year. So they assembled on Sunday afternoon in their motley garments. At one service I saw a woman with pink corsets over a very proper dress; but there was no such indiscretion on this particular Sunday. These were some of the reasons given as cause for thanksgiving, and from among all I have taken one of every kind: —

One woman said that her child had died, and that she had found comfort in the House of God.

Another that, in answer to prayer, the animals no longer molest her garden.

Another, that when she had visited a distant clan, ignorant of the things of God, and was taunted by them for her belief, she had been given strength to withstand their taunts.

Another, that while she used to have to work hard and had none to help her, now God had sent her some one from the beach.

There is an insult in vogue here which gives rise to the most deadly quarrel, — it is to *ta*. I am sure I can't say why it is so effective; it is all a matter of words; but several women gave thanks for this: that they had suffered without retaliation when told that their husbands or their mothers were *taed*.

Pretty smiling Malinga, wife of Ze, was thankful that she and her husband had been given grace to carry loads for the governor, and that God had put it into the heart of the governor to allow them to rest on the Sundays.

There is one old woman who has held my attention from my first sight of her, so unhappy and so poor does she appear, — so like an ancient maltreated orphan. She rose in her bits of rags to say that she had ten children, five of

them were dead and five of them scorned her, — God helped her bear it. Her name is Wawa; I go often to see her since, to make up for her children. Of course, we do not converse very much, since she speaks only Ngumba, and I speak 'three words' of Bulu, but in spite of such limitations we seem to be in a fair way to make friends. She told me yesterday that we were 'one person,' which I thought a rather extreme inference; but Mrs. Lehman said not to be frightened, that it was a not uncommon expression and entailed no responsibilities.

Well, these were some of the reasons why the women thanked God; and some of them, you will agree, went deep. If many were quaint and fantastic, and if some were grossly material, why, so must many of our own appreciations seem to God.

*November 4.*

These people are not without manner; indeed, they have a great deal. They greet one, and take leave; they clasp hands; they appreciate by facial expression and by little formal ejaculations the conversation of the missionaries even when it is not understood by them, or, being understood, bores them; and all this in a very finished fashion. They have, I think, a real courtesy of the heart. But their conventions are so unlike ours that we often have mutual misgivings, and they infer, I fancy, that we have been badly brought up. I take lessons wherever I may, and hope to be able, eventually, to enter and to leave a town, having properly saluted the inhabitants and having announced my departure in form.

A town in this neighborhood consists of two rows of houses with a street between. The houses differ very little. They are all low huts of a room each, say, a matter of eighteen feet by seven, with two openings like windows in the centre of each long wall. The frame-

work is of sapling poles, the walls of plates of a bark which is yellow when newly cut but which soon tones to a silver brown, as do the leaf-mats which form the roof and make a thatch in appearance very like a straw thatch. The eaves project beyond the walls some two feet, and hang low; it is almost always necessary to stoop in passing under them. Certainly you must stoop to enter the door of the house, and at the same time must step over the sill, which will be anywhere from one to two feet from the ground. Inside you find yourself on a mud floor in an interior persistently brown. For furniture there will be several beds made of split poles laid in rows on two logs which serve as legs; another serves as pillow, and all these are brown and polished with use. From the roof will be hanging mysterious bundles done up in plantain leaves brown with smoke; gourds, brown by nature, I suppose; brown baskets for peanuts and corn. On the ground will be a fire and a woman evolving a meal; but there will be no chimney in the roof, which explains a good many things, and why the unseasoned visitor presently makes for the street. An average street will be from fifty to sixty feet wide, perfectly clean and generally barren, necessarily so when it is a section of the excellent government road.

There is, now that I think of it, quite a difference in character between such a travel-worn town and one where the little forest path, which has wandered into the street at one end, makes out at the other into the green shade. In such a town there may be oil-palm trees; there will be, back of the houses or near them, little groves of plantain trees, their great banner-like leaves murmuring in the wind or drooping, green like the inner curve of a wave, in the still air. But most gardens are at a distance from the town. Thus, if you pass at eleven of a morning there will be no life

stirring more than the silly, coatless sheep; while at five of an afternoon every house will give you a greeting.

December 2.

Any one passing through Benzork's village the other day would have witnessed a nice civilized scene. A white man going about the country in the interest of rubber culture, laboring with the natives not to cut the vines down but to tap them, had pitched his tent in the middle of this village and so, white-man fashion, owned the place. Here he might be seen of an evening sitting outside his admirable little tent, playing pleasant airs on a cornet, — an accomplishment which might have endeared him to the entire community; but that he set little store by popularity, you will agree when his deeds come to light. One night he could not sleep for the noise of rats in a neighboring house. The house was empty, and the stranger found the rats among the fetishes of poor Benzork, who is off in Bulu. There is a flourish to the effect that he found some of his food hidden away by the rats in the treasured skulls. Be that as it may, the white man brought the skulls out of the house and arranged them in a line beside the path, sixteen poor skulls amazed at the stars. Behind these he set up two *mingunemelan* — small wooden idols — sitting passive among these ruins. So I saw them next morning, and so they were seen of common eyes, both of men and women. Who shall say what thoughts burned in the hearts of the men of Benzork's town, or with what emotions the Christians looked at this shame of the past? For myself, I could not look at these things of darkness under the morning sun with any lightness of heart. Mr. Heminger saw Benzork's little daughter step off the path to walk directly in front of the line, — a very bold, bad action indeed and entirely in

keeping with the little girl's reputation, for had not she once slapped the faces of the unwinking *mingunemelan*, the very same that watched her from behind the skulls? And did she not, for this offense, suffer a sore disease of her guilty arm? Presently the fetishes were gathered up by black soldiers, who took them up the government hill, and from there, by order of authority, they were thrown into the river; which is a reason, if another were needed, why one had best not drink river water. One evening after these events I saw the white man sitting in front of his tent playing a pleasing air, in which he paused to bow to me with mild courtesy. Benzork has not yet returned to his desecrated hearth; but one of his little daughters, three years of age, has been sent to him that she may be turned over to a man who has bought her.

Benzhuli is a young Ngumba who assists in the school and has many talents. He is the dressmaker of this region. He is very kind and gentle with stupid little children. For a long time he has been paying goods on a girl, — guns and goats and many hundreds of little iron objects called *nsuba*, that are currency for women. One day he hears that Minko, son of a big, bad headman, is in the running and likely to win out, for all that Benzhuli has the start of him in goods. Benzhuli takes a vacation to talk this palaver, and finds that the people of the girl's village favor the other man. And when the girl says she will have Benzhuli or none, they tie her up with bush rope, and make off with her into the forest. You can think if Benzhuli is happy. He comes back to Lolodorf, and an account of the affair goes 'up on the hill,' that is, to the government post. And one day along the road comes a file of people, the girl with her people and Minko with his, pretty well laden with goods, — Benzhuli's goods, which they expect



to pay back, as they certainly expect to 'stand' in the palaver. But not so. The governor listens to them and he listens to Benzhuli, and then, for all he is German, conducts himself like a true Ngumba 'cutter of palavers.' Placing two sticks on the ground, he names them for the rivals, and 'Which will you have?' he asks the girl. She, in the face of her oppressors, takes the Benzhuli stick. 'You belong to me,' says Benzhuli (Dr. Lehman had heard him talking the day before to Minko about 'our woman').

So they come down the hill together. Presently they appear at the station, Benzhuli a very smiling school-teacher and dressmaker, but poor Mvunga sad and shrinking and timid, as how could she be else? It is no light matter to break through the custom of a country, and women are sorry pioneers. Since then her husband the dressmaker has made her a garment, and her husband the teacher has taught her the alphabet, and she quite blooms in school, for she is a pretty girl with more than average poise.

I have told you of these two events because they are of the most vital importance to these people. In all the community there is wagging of heads, the heads of the elders, for the old things are passing away. Two weeks ago last Sunday there was held in the church, after the morning service, a meeting called by the Ngumba Christians at their own instigation, to consider the giving and taking of wives without price. I cannot understand Ngumba, so I did not know what was said, nor do I think that the missionaries look for any material results from this meeting. But consider what it means that there should be a few men in any African community who voice such ideas. You cannot fancy how deeply complicated this marriage system is nor how many ramifications

there may be to a 'woman palaver.' The other day Mr. Heminger was sitting in a hut talking with two members of his congregation, wives of one husband. He was talking to them about their sins, which were of an obvious character: the younger woman had been accused of stealing food. Then he turned to the elder, Wawa, she of the ten children, five dead and five cruel.

'Wawa,' said he, 'why cannot you live at peace with this wife of your husband? Why are you always quarrelling?' (They are notorious scrappers.) 'Well,' said Wawa, 'she was bought with one of my children and I cannot forget it.'

By the last steamer there came from America the latest translation into Bulu of Mark, Luke, and John; we already have a new Matthew and Acts. To-day these were put on the market. And what joy in the little Christian communities, what haste to buy the pearl of great price, what caressing of little black books, and how Ngwa's teeth shone, and his eyes, when in a state of exalted extravagance he bought two, calling out to his wife, 'I give you this!' I think that this deep African joy in his Word must be a very flower of prayer before God.

*March 24.*

To-day I started out on one of the main roads, and as I passed through the towns I put my head in at every brown hut and said who would might follow me; that I meant to hold a meeting in Biali's town. Presently I might be seen to lead a straggling single file of women, — yet not so single either, for almost every one had a child slung to her shoulder by a strap. To these were added a few small boys who very much admire me. So we walked along the road, which left the open sunny spaces of the town and dropped into a hollow of the forest, very cool and green. And arriving at Biali's town, we consorted

under a roof which will some day, perhaps, develop walls. Now it is open to all the winds, which is more of an advantage than you are likely to realize. The missionary, seated on a gin<sup>1</sup> box, was sufficiently elevated above her audience, which sat upon the ground. So I led the little meeting in a species of Bulu of which it is a shame so much as to speak. I spoke as well as I might about Christ and the Good Samaritan.

On the way home we passed a sick carrier who was being left by his fellows on the open road and with no more comfort than he was likely to get from a fire they had built him. When we neared him his friends were running from him, though I took them to be running from an impending rain; but a lad who had come with me from the meeting knew his people better, and the coincidence moved him. Here was his chance to be a good Samaritan! And I left him calling out shame upon the priest and the Levite, and holding out to the sufferer glittering possibilities of relief at the hands of Dr. Lehman. Don't ask for the end of this story, for I was running home under an angry sky — you know that there was only one Samaritan in the parable.

*April 18.*

A few minutes ago a black boy arrived on the porch in a great hurry, and set about wiping his feet like a well-trained dog before entering the house. There was quite an air of bustle about this performance. I supposed the boy to have arrived on an errand of importance. As he came into the lighted room it proved to be Bitum. 'What do you hunt?' asked I. 'My hat,' said he, 'I hate to sleep far away from my hat. My hat and I, we sleep in one place!' So off he went in the moonlight, with

<sup>1</sup> Sold at trading-posts. — THE AUTHOR.

his atrocious hat under his arm. But there was something very quaint about the eagerness of this quest.

*May 3.*

I must say the study of Bulu worries me. I am working at it with a will, but more will than anything else. I sit down in a palaver house and listen to the men talk. Yesterday I heard a most animated palaver about a woman and one Ndungo, and a goat. Bits of sugar-cane stalk were spread upon the ground as the characters took the stage. The woman enters — a strip of stalk. Ndungo enters — another strip laid down with a discriminating squint of the eye. The goat, placed at a safe distance; and then four little strips laid down and adjusted with a final pat — these were the woman's children. What drama was enacted by these strips is beyond my guessing, but they moved about their little stage to the disapproval of their audience. Truly their doings would seem to have been shocking. Only one man laughed at the play, and him I took to be Ndungo in the flesh, who could not see himself so dramatic without audible joy and self-approval.

Presently the man who was declaiming stopped to look at me, all his gesture at rest and the fire of his eloquence flickering. 'Why is the white woman here?' inquired he.

'I have sat down to hear the Bulu speak, but if you hate to have me here I shall go.'

How he liked this reply and took me for the nice sensible person that I am! 'That is good,' said he. 'You may stay and listen to me,' which I did.

I am trying to get a little Bulu girl to live in the house with me, who will, it may be, love me. But I cannot, of course, exact this exercise of her affections, and I shall have to be very severe and very watchful if I get her.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE EXTIRPATION OF CULTURE

BY KATHARINE FULLERTON GEROULD

### I

It is odd how words recur. There has been more talk about culture, among educated people in America, during the last months, than there had been for years. To be sure, the culture discussed since August, 1914, has been German culture; but that does not matter. We have actually been talking about it once more; rehabilitating it, if only for the sake of denying that the Germans, by and large, have a monopoly of anything so good. To some of us, this recurrence of a word so long *tabu* is welcome — and as side-splittingly funny as it is welcome. For the fact is that for twenty years — ever since Matthew Arnold went out of fashion — to speak of culture has meant that one did not have it. The only people who have talked about it have been the people who have thought you could get it at Chautauquas. To use the word damned you in the eyes of the knowing. Now I have always, privately and humbly, thought it a pity that so good a word should go out of the best vocabularies; for when you lose an abstract term you are very apt to lose the thing it stands for. Indeed, it has seemed only too clear that we were doing all in our power to lose both the word and the thing. I fancy we ought to be grateful to the Germans for getting 'culture' on to all the editorial pages of the country; though I admit it sometimes seems as if the Germans bore out the rule that only those people talk about it who have it not. I should real-

ly like to make a plea for the temporary reversal of the rule. Indeed, I think we are getting to a point where we are so little 'cultured' that we can really afford to talk about it. When the plutocrat goes bankrupt, he may once more, with decency, mention the prices of things. Culture has ceased to be a passionate American preoccupation. Perhaps we shall not offend modesty if we use the word once more.

Now there are some who, believing that all is for the best in the best of possible worlds, and that to-morrow is necessarily better than to-day, may think that if culture is a good thing we shall infallibly be found to have more of it than we had a generation since; and that if we can be shown not to have more of it, it can be shown not to be worth seeking. Having, myself, a congenital case of agoraphobia, I habitually say nothing to the professional optimists in the public square. The wilderness is a good place to cry in; the echoes are magnificent. So I shall not attempt to deprive any one of *Candide's* happy conviction. If any person is kind enough to listen, I will simply ask him to contemplate a few facts with me. No one will be too optimistic, I fancy, to grant that there are *proportionally* fewer Americans who care about culture — and who know the real thing when they see it — than there were one or two generations ago. 'Contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world' is not desired by so large a proportion of the community as it was. That there are new and *parvenu*

branches of learning, furiously followed, I, on my part, shall not attempt to deny. But culture is another matter. Perhaps the sociologists can show that this is a good thing. I do not ask any one to deplore anything. I only ask the well-disposed to examine the change that has come over the spirit of our American dream.

If I were asked to give, off hand, the causes of the gradual extirpation of culture among us, I should name the following: —

1. The increased hold of the democratic fallacy on the public mind.

2. The influx of a racially and socially inferior population.

3. Materialism in all classes.

4. The idolatry of science.

Only one of these is purely intellectual; two might almost be called political. In point of fact, all four are interwoven.

## II

I should be insultingly trite if I proceeded here to expound the fallacy of the historic statement that all men are born free and equal. We have all known for a long time that individual freedom and individual equality cannot coexist. I dare say no one since Thomas Jefferson (and may I express my doubts even of that inspired charlatan?) has really believed it. No one could believe it at the present day except the people who are flattered by it; and of people who are flattered by it, it is obviously not true. The democracy of the present day — like the aristocracy of another day — is fostered by the people whom it advantages; and the people whom it advantages are adding themselves, at the rate of a million a year, to our census lists. When even democracy has to reckon with the fact that its premises are all wrong, and that men are not born equal, — that hierarchies are inherent in human kind

regardless of birth or opportunity, — it proceeds to do its utmost to equalize artificially; it becomes Procrustes. But will any one contend that Procrustes left people free?

Now, what has this to do with culture? Simply this: that culture is not a democratic achievement, because culture is inherently snobbish. 'Contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world' makes people intellectually exclusive, and makes them draw distinctions. Those distinctions, seriously speaking, are not founded on social origins or great possessions; they are founded on states of mind. So long as democracy is simply a political matter, culture is left free to select its groups and proclaim its hierarchies. But it is characteristic of our democracy that political equality has not sufficed to it; the 'I am as good as you are' formula has been flung out to every horizon. The people with whom it has become a mania insist that their equality with every one else in their range of vision is a moral, an intellectual, a social, as well as a political, equality. Let that formula prevail, and culture, with its eternal distinction-drawing, will naturally die. For contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world induces a mighty humility — and a mighty scorn of those who do not know enough to be humble before the Masters. They are an impersonal humility and an impersonal scorn, — attitudes of the mind, both, not of the heart. But humility and scorn are both ruled, theoretically, out of the democratic court.

The pure-bred American once cared for culture, and no longer — to the same extent, at least — does. If any one asks why America (I use the word loosely, as meaning our United States), having always, since the Revolution, been a democracy, can have cared for so undemocratic a thing, the answer is

simple. The democracy of our forefathers was a purely pragmatic affair. The Declaration of Independence was framed by men living in a world where it was almost true enough to be workable. Roughly speaking, in pioneer and colonial days — wherever and whoever the pioneers and colonists may be — the community is a democracy because it is an aristocracy. In those grimmer worlds, the fittest do survive because there is no incubator process to keep the feeble going. A pioneer and colonial group, moreover, is apt to be like-minded; people do not exile themselves in each other's company unless they want the same things. Minor differences of opinion are swallowed up in like major needs: you form coalition governments against savages and famine or a specially detested tyranny. In the modern 'I am as good as you are' sense, our ancestors were not democratic at all. They were democratic for their own special group, and a pragmatic truth misled them, — as, because we admire them, we are permitting it to mislead us. They were Brahminical in their attitude to learning; they thought it supremely valuable, and they did not believe in — no Brahmin wants to believe in — a royal road to it, any more than they believed in a royal road to the salvation of the soul. They believed in intellectual, as much as they did in spiritual, election; and they certainly did not think that politics could influence either. Up to the last generation or two, they looked upon the cultured man as a peculiarly favored person; and because culture (unlike beauty, let us say) depended to some extent on the effort of the individual, they thought it fit to mention.

Now there is this about a pragmatic truth: like any other invention of the devil, it smooths the road for the lazy. If it did not smooth the road, it would not be, by pragmatic definition, truth.

And the great bulk of us have found the 'free and equal' statement such a help that, though we cannot pretend for a moment that it is true, we stick to it. The schoolboy sticks to it because it greases his oratory; the politician sticks to it because his constituents like the sound of it; the detrimental sticks to it because it is his only apology. And, just as you cannot suppress a word without eventually suppressing the thing it stands for, so you cannot utter a statement forever without imbibing some of its poison. Even as our reasonable national pride turned into the spread-eagleism that Dickens and Mrs. Trollope caricatured, so the 'free and equal' shibboleth turned into the 'I am as good as you are' formula. Why trouble about anything, if you were already lord of the world? At first, it was Europe we defied. What were the ancient oligarchies, to impose on us their standards, intellectual, social, or moral? We set up our own standards, because we were as good as any one else, — and also because it was a little easier.

### III

Let me say before going further, that I am not blaming the lower classes alone for the extirpation of culture among us. The upper classes are equally responsible, — if, indeed, not even more to blame. We have become materialistic: our very virtues are more materialistic than they were. It is forgivable in the poor man to be materialistic; for unless he has bread to keep his body alive, he will presently have no soul to cherish. Materialism is less pardonable in the man who always knows where his next meal is coming from. He, if you like, does have time to worry about his soul. None the less, he worries about it very little. There used to be a good deal of fun poked at

settlement-workers who tried to read Dante and Shakespeare to slum-dwellers. I am not sure that those misguided youths and maidens who first carried Dante and Shakespeare into the slums were not right as to substance, however wrong they were as to sequence. The only morally decent excuse for wanting to have a little more money than you actually need to feed and clothe your family, is your ambition to have a little mental energy to spend on things not of the body. The ultimate tragedy of the slums is that, in slum conditions, one can scarcely think, from birth to death, of anything but the body. The upper-class people who think of pleasing their palates instead of relieving hunger, of being in the fashion instead of covering their nakedness, are no more civilized than the slum-dwellers. They are apt to become more so; for it is a strange fact that a family can seldom be rich through several generations without discovering some æsthetic truths. And æsthetic truths lead to moral perceptions. You cannot with impunity fill your ears with good music, your eyes with good painting and sculpture and architecture. Something happens to you, after a time, no matter how vulgar you may be. But wealth is very fluctuating in our country; and several generations of it are not often seen. The people who are rich now are generally people whose grandfathers and great-grandfathers were fighting for sheer existence. So we have the spectacle of the dominant plutocrats (no one will deny that plutocracy is the order of the day, both here and in Europe) either mindful themselves of the struggle for existence, or in a state of having only just forgotten it. They are not going to push their children into a race for intangible goods. And the more we recruit from immigrants who bring no personal traditions with

them, the more America is going to ignore the things of the spirit. No one whose consuming desire is either for food or for motor cars is going to care about culture, or even know what it is. And it is another misfortune of our over-quicken social evolution that the middle classes do not stay middle-class. They climb to wealth, or sink to indigence. Neither that quick rise nor that quick fall is any time in which to cherish their own or their children's intellects.

Both from above and below, then, our colleges and schools have felt the hostile pressure. Colleges are, on the one hand, jeered at for doing their business badly, and, on the other, accused of being too difficult. We are always hearing that college is of no earthly use to a man except as he learns there to rub up against other men. We are always hearing, also, that the college curriculum is a cruel strain on the average boy or girl. On one score or another, the colleges are always being attacked; and the attack usually includes the hint that the real test of a 'college education' is not the intrinsic value, but its success or failure in preparing the youth for something that has nothing to do with learning. Will it be of social or financial use to him? If not, why make sacrifices to get it? Far be it from me to assert that the intellectual flame never burns in the breast of collegiate youth! But I do believe it provable that there is far less tendency to regard learning as a good in itself, and far more tendency to cheat scholarship, if possible, in the interest of some other thing held good, than there was two generations ago. Ignorance of what real learning is, and a consequent suspicion of it; materialism, and a consequent intellectual laxity,—both of these have done destructive work in the colleges.

The education of younger children



is in like case. We put them into kindergartens where their reasoning powers are ruined; or, if we can afford it, we buy Montessori outfits that were invented for semi-imbeciles in Italian slums; or we send them to outdoor schools and give them prizes for sleeping. Every one knows what a fight the old universities have had to put up to keep their entrance standards at all. With the great new army of state universities admitting students from the public schools without examination, because they themselves are part of the big public-school system, how can it be otherwise?

Now the patriotic American may see — and rightly enough — in the public-school system which includes a college training, a relic of the desperate desire of our forefathers that education, as a major good, should be within the reach of all and sundry. But even the patriotic American must see another impulse at work: the impulse to put the college intellectually, as well as financially, within the reach of all. The colleges must not set up standards for themselves that the average boy or girl, from the ordinary school, cannot reach without difficulty, because that is undemocratic.

Now I know as well as other people that it is positively harder to get into our old universities to-day than it was in our fathers' day. But granted the enormously increased facilities for preparation all over the land, it is not relatively anything like so hard. Certainly, once in, it is possible to get through the college course with less work than ever before. In the first place, there is a much wider choice of subjects on which a boy can get his degree: his tastes are consulted as they never used to be. If he does not want to endure the discipline of Greek, he can get an A.B. at every college in the country — except Princeton — with-

out knowing a word of Greek. Even at Princeton, he can take a Litt.B. and let Greek forever alone. He can study sociology, or Spanish, or physical culture, or nearly anything he likes. I have even heard that in one of our state universities there is a department of hat-trimming, which contributes its quota to the courses for a (presumably feminine) academic degree.

It may be objected at this point that the fluctuations of colleges have nothing to do with our standards of culture. I think they have, a great deal. No one will deny that culture can be got elsewhere, or that colleges do not suffice in themselves to give it. But if colleges do not consider themselves custodians of culture, warders and cherishers of the flame, they have no reason for existence. It is a platitude that business men consider college a worthless preparation for business life, — save as a young man may have laid up there treasure for himself in the shape of valuable 'connections.' Even the conception of college as a four years' paradise intervening before the hell of an active struggle for existence, does not touch upon the original reason for universities' being at all. Universities were invented for the sake of bringing their fortunate students into contact with the precious lore of the world, there garnered and kept pure. There was no idea on the part of their founders that every one would or could partake of academic benefits. The social scheme would not originally have allowed that; still less would the conception of the public intellect have admitted the notion. Every one was not supposed to be congenitally qualified for intimacy with the best that has been said and thought in the world. They had no notion, until very recently, of so changing the terms of that intimacy that every one might think he could have it. Learning, culture, were not to be adul-

terated so that any mental digestive process whatsoever could take them in.

But now, in America, there is a tendency that way. If a boy does not feel a preestablished harmony between his soul and the humanities, then give him an academic degree on something with which his soul will be in preestablished harmony. And if there is no preestablished harmony between his soul and any form of learning, then create institutions that will give him a degree with no learning to speak of at all. I do not mean to deny that many of our virtually valueless colleges were founded in the pathetic inherited conviction that learning and culture were too great goods not to be accessible to all who cared passionately for them. But I do believe that the reverence for learning and culture has been largely replaced by a conviction that anything which has so great a reputation as a college degree must be put within the reach of all, even at the risk of making its reputation a farce. The privileged have been unwilling that their children should be made to work; the unprivileged have been unwilling that their children should see anything of good repute, anything with a prestige value, denied to them. We have all demanded a royal road to a thing to which there is no royal road. The expensive schools lead their pupils from kindergarten to nature-study and eurhythmics, with basket-work and gymnastics thrown in; the public schools follow them as closely as they can. Of real training of the mind there is very little in any school. The rich do not want their children overworked; the poor want a practical result for their children's fantastically long school hours. So domestic science comes in for girls, and carpentering for boys. Anything to make it easy, on the one hand; anything to make a universal standard possible, on the other.

Take one example only: the attitude toward Greek. There are two arguments against teaching our children Greek: one, that it is too hard; the other, that it is useless. The mere fact that public opinion has drummed Greek out of court as an inevitable part of a college curriculum shows that these arguments have been potent. No person who could be influenced by either has the remotest conception of the meaning or the value of culture. Culture has never renounced a thing because it was difficult, or because it did not help people to make money. And the mere fact that Greek is no longer supposed by the vast majority of parents to be of any 'use' — even as a matter of reputation — to their sons, shows that the old standards of culture have changed. The larger part of our public schools no longer teach Greek at all; a great many private schools have to make special arrangements for pupils who wish to study it. And the attitude toward Greek is only a sign of our democratic, materialistic times.

#### IV

Now I have done with the colleges. I have dealt with them at all only by way of hinting that they have been so democratized that culture means, even to its avowed exponents, something different from what it has ever meant before. May I speak for one moment explicitly of the public schools? For we must trace all this back to the source — must begin with the ostensible homes of 'culture' and follow up the stream to the latent public consciousness. Each class that comes into college has read fewer and fewer of what are called the classics of English literature. An astonishing number of boys and girls have read nothing worth reading except the books that are in the entrance requirements. An increasing propor-

tion of the sons and daughters of the prosperous are positively illiterate at college age. They cannot spell; they cannot express themselves grammatically; and they are inclined to think that it does not matter. General laxity, and the adoption of educational fads which play havoc with real education, are largely responsible. In the less fortunate classes, the fact seems to be that the public schools are so swamped by foreigners that all the teachers can manage to do is to teach the pupils a little workable English. Needless to say, the profession of the public-school teacher has become less and less tempting to people who are really fit for it.

It is not only in the great cities that the immigrant population swamps the schoolroom. An educated woman told me, not long since, that there was no school in the place where she lived — one of our oldest New England towns — to which she could send her boy. The town could not support a private school for young children; and the public school was out of the question. I had been brought up to believe that public schools in old New England towns were very decent places; and I asked her why. The answer made it clear. Three fourths of the school-children were Lithuanians, and a decently bred American child could simply learn nothing in their classes. They had to be taught English, first of all; they approached even the most elementary subjects very slowly; and — natural corollary — the teachers themselves were virtually illiterate. Therefore she was teaching her boy at home until he could go to a preparatory school. Fortunately, she was capable of doing it; but there are many mothers who cannot ground their children in the languages and sciences. A woman who could not would have had to watch her child acquiring a Lithuanian accent and the locutions of the slum.

An isolated case is never worth much. But one has only to consider conditions at large to see that this has everything to make it typical. One has only to look at any official record of immigration, any chart of distribution of population by races, to see how the old American stock is being numerically submerged. If you do not wish to look at anything so dull as statistics, look at the comic papers. A fact does not become a stock joke until it is pretty well visible to the average man. Our forefathers cared immensely for education; they felt themselves humble before learning; and their schools followed, soon and sacredly, upon their churches. They stood in awe of the real thing; and they had no illusions as to the ease of the scholar's path. They legislated for their schools solemnly, and if not with complete wisdom, always at least with accurate ideals. Educational (like all other) legislation nowadays is largely in the hands of illiterate people, and the illiterate will take good care that their illiteracy is not made a reproach to them. If any one chooses to say that culture must always be in the hands of an oligarchy, and that the oligarchy has not been touched, I will only ask him to consider the pupils and the teaching in most private schools. In the end, prestige values are going to tell; and the vast bulk of our population will see to it that the prestige values are not absolutely unattainable to them. The great fortunes have made their way to the top — yes, really to the top. In many cases there has been time for a quick veneer of grammar to be laid over their original English. In many cases there has not; and no one cares. The custodians of culture cannot afford to care; for their custody must either be endowed or be forsaken.

Oh, yes; there are a few Brahmins left; but one has only to look at the marriages of any given season to see

what is becoming of the purity of the Brahmin caste. The Brahmins themselves are beginning to see that they are lost unless they compound with the materialists, and make or marry money, — or increase, by aid of the materialists, what they have inherited. In what New England village, now, is the minister or the scholar looked up to as a fount of municipal wisdom because he is a learned man? Is he a 'good mixer'? That is what they ask: I have heard them. Once it was possible in America for a poor man to hope to gain for his children, if they deserved it, the life of the intellect and of the spirit. Now it no longer is; for the poor themselves have defiled the fount. They are a different kind of poor, that is all; and they have become an active and discontented majority, with hands that pick and steal. When they no longer need to pick and steal, they carry their infection higher and give it as a free gift. And they have been aided by the Brahmins themselves; who, having dabbled in sociology *pour se désœuvrer*, and then for charity's sake, are now finding that sociology is a grim matter of life and death, and endow chairs of it — as if one should endow chairs of self-preservation. But self-preservation is not culture and never will be; and no study of the manners and customs of savages or slums can call itself 'contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world.'

v

We owe, too, I think, a great deal of our cultural deterioration (which I admit is a villainous phrase) to science. Science has come in with a rush, and is at present — why deny it? — on top. 'Scientific' is a word to charm with, even though it has already had time to be degraded. If Mrs. Eddy had called her bargain-counter Orientalism any-

thing but 'science,' would she have drawn so many followers? Science has done great things for us; it has also pushed us hopelessly back. For, not content with filling its own place, it has tried to supersede everything else. It has challenged the supereminence of religion; it has turned all philosophy out of doors except that which clings to its skirts; it has thrown contempt on all learning that does not depend on it; and it has bribed the skeptics by giving us immense material comforts. To the plea, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God,' it has retorted that no word proceeds authentically out of the mouth of God save what it has issued in its own translations. It is more rigorous and more exclusive than the Index of the Roman Church. The Inquisition never did anything so oppressive as to put all men, innocent or guilty, into a laboratory. Science cares supremely for physical things. If it restricted itself to the physical world, it would be tolerable: we could shut ourselves away with our souls in peace. But it must control the soul as well as the body: it insists on reducing all emotions, however miraculous and dear, to a question of nerve-centres. There has never been tyranny like this.

Now I do not mean to say that all scientists despise culture. That would be silly and untrue. But the 'scientific' obsession has changed all rankings in the intellectual world. The insidiousness of science lies in its claim to be not a subject, but a method. You could ignore a subject: no subject is all-inclusive. But a method can plausibly be applied to anything within the field of consciousness. Small wonder that the study of literature turns into philology, the study of history into archæology, and the study of morals and æsthetics into physical psychology. With the finer appeals of philosophy

and poetry and painting and natural beauty, science need not meddle; because about their direct effect on the thought and wills of men it can say nothing valuable. You cannot determine the value of a Velasquez by putting your finger on the pulse of the man who is looking at it; or the value of Amiens Cathedral by registering the vibration of his internal muscles; or of the Grand Cañon of the Colorado by declaring that all perception of beauty is a function of sex. Nor does it matter very much, at the moment, to the enraptured reader or observer that such and such a work of art was the logical result of a given set of conditions. The point is that it is there; and that it works potently upon us in ways which we can scarce phrase. Culture puts us disinterestedly in communication with the distilled and sifted lore of the world. Science is in comparison a prejudiced affair — prejudiced because it seeks always to bring things back to literal and physical explanations. Far be it from me to deny that geology, biology, physics, have given us unapprehended vistas down which to stray — only, strictly speaking, it forbids the straying. The moment the layman's imagination begins to profit, begins to get real exhilaration from scientific discoveries, it contributes something unwelcome to science. Science has its own stern value; in the end we are all profoundly affected by its gains in the field of fact. One's quarrel is not with science as such, but with science as demanding an intellectual and spiritual hegemony. With nothing less than hegemony, however, will science be content.

Now if it is not yet clear what effect all this must have on culture, a few words may make it clearer. The great danger of the scientific obsession is not the destruction of all things that are not science, but the slow infection of

those things. If the laboratory is your real test, then most philosophies and all art are no good. The scientists are not good philosophers, and they are not good artists; and if science is to rule everywhere, we must shelve philosophy and art, or else take them into the laboratory. I need not point out what has become of literature under a scientific régime. We all know the hopeless fiction that is created by the scientific method: fiction that banks on its anecdotal accuracy and has in it no spiritual truth. Literature is simply a different game: you do not get the greatest literary truth by the laboratory method. Art is not reducible to science, because science takes no account of the special truth which is beauty, of the special truth which is moral imagination.

It is not only by the laboratory method that our fiction has been ruined: a great many of our writers of fiction are not up to the laboratory method. But all our fiction has been harmed by the prevalent idea that no fiction is any good which is not done by the laboratory method, and that even fiction which attempts that method is of little value in comparison with a card-catalogue. There were some snobs who were not affected by the democratic fallacy; but even the snobs have been affected by scientific scorn.

## VI

I may have seemed to be showing rather the reasons for the extirpation of culture among us than the fact of the extirpation. Perhaps that is not the best way to go to work. But the actual evidence is so multitudinously at hand that it was hardly worth while beginning with solemn proofs of the fact. In all branches of art and learning we have a cult of the modern. Modern languages rank Latin and Greek in our



schools and colleges; practical and 'vocational' training is displacing the rudiments of learning in all of our public and many of our private institutions for the teaching of the young; the books admitted to the lists of 'literature' include many that never have been and never will be literature. I found, a few years ago, the following books on a list from which students of English were allowed to choose their reading for the course, — this, in one of the old and respectable high schools of Massachusetts, not twenty miles from Boston: *Soldiers of Fortune*, *Pushing to the Front*, *Greifenstein*, *Doctor Latimer*, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, *The Honorable Peter Stirling*, *The First Violin*, and 'any of the works of Stewart Edward White.' These, and many others, may be, in their way, good reading, but there is no excuse for offering them to the young student of English as examples of 'literature.'

Standards of beauty and truth are no longer rigidly held up. In philosophy we have produced pragmatism; in art we have produced futurism, — and what not, since then? — in literature we have produced the pathologic and the economic novel, and no poetry worth speaking of. The 'grand style' has gone out; and the classics are back numbers. Our children do not even speak good English; and no one minds. They cannot be bored with Scott and Dickens; they cannot be bored with poetry at all. And why should they, when their fathers and mothers are reading *Laddie* and *The Sick-a-Bed Lady*, and their clergymen are preaching about *The Inside of the Cup* — or the latest work dealing with the slums by some one who was slum-born and slum-bred, and is proud of it? You can be slum-born and slum-bred and still achieve something worth while; but it is a stupid inverted snobbishness to be proud of it. If one had a right to be

proud of anything, it would be of a continued decent tradition back of one. The cultured person must have put in a great many years with nothing to show for it; his parents have usually put in a great many years, for him, for which they have nothing to show. There is nothing to show, until you get the complex result of the disciplined and finished creature. 'Culture' means a long receptivity to things of the mind and the spirit. There is no money in it; there is nothing striking in it; there is in it no flattery of our own time, or of the majority.

Ours is a commercial age, in which most people are bent on getting money. That is a platitude. It is also, intellectually speaking, a materialistic age, when most of our intellectual power is given either to prophylaxis, or to industrial chemistry, or to the invention of physical conveniences — all ultimately concerned with the body. Even the philanthropists deal with the soul through the body, and Christianity has long since become 'muscular.' How, in such an age, can culture flourish, — culture, which cares even more about the spirit than about the flesh? It was pointed out not long ago, in an *Atlantic* article, that many of our greatest minds have dwelt in bodies that the eugenists would have legislated out of existence. Many of the greatest saints found sainthood precisely in denying the power of the ailing flesh to restrict the soul. There is more in the great mystics than psychiatry will ever account for. But science, in spite of its vistas, is short-sighted. It talks in æons, but keeps its eye well screwed to the microscope. The geologic ages are dealt with by pick and hammer and reduced to slides, and the lore of the stars has become a pure matter of mathematical formulæ. Human welfare is a question of microbes. Neither pundit nor populace cares, at the pres-



ent day, for perspectives. The past is discredited because it is not modern. Not to be modern is the great sin.

So, perhaps, it is. But every one has, in his day, been modern. And surely even modernity is a poor thing beside immortality. Since we must all die, is it not perhaps better to be a dead lion than a living dog? And is it not a crime against human nature to consider negligible 'the best that has been said and thought in the world'? It is only by considering it negligible that we can consent to let ourselves be overrun by the hordes of ignorance and materialism, — the people (God save the mark!) of to-morrow. Let us stand, if we must, on practical grounds: the bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. As if our only guaranty that to-morrow would be tolerable were not precisely that it is sprung from a past that we know to have been, at many points, noble! It is pathetic to see people refusing to learn the lessons of history; it is a waste that no efficiency expert ought to permit. All learning is a textbook which would save much time to him who works for the perfection of the world. But I begin to think that our age does not really care about perfection; and that it would rather make a thousand-year-old mistake than learn a remedy from history. So much the worse for to-morrow!

But meanwhile let us — those of us who can — see to it that the preëminent brains of other ages shall not have passed away in vain. M. Anatole France, in *La Révolte des Anges*, has a good deal to say about the absurdity of a Jehovah who still believes in the Pto-

lemaïc system. Well, the Ptolemaïc system did not prevent the ancient world from giving us Greek theatres and Roman law, or England from giving us Magna Charta. We are still imitating Greek theatres (rather badly, I admit) in our stadia; Roman law is still, by and large, good enough for such an enlightened country as France; and Magna Charta — or its equivalent — had to be there before we could have a Declaration of Independence. Our superior scientific knowledge has not given us our standards of beauty or justice or liberty. Let us take what the present offers — Zeppelins and all. But let us not throw away what other men, in other ages, have died for the sake of discovering. If the lore of the past is useless, there is every chance — one must be very overweening indeed not to admit it — that the lore of our generation will be useless, too. Culture — whether you use the word itself or find another term — means only a decent economy of human experience. You cannot improve on things without keeping those things pretty steadily in mind. Otherwise you run the risk of wasting a lot of time doing something that has already been done. Any one, I think, will admit that. And it is not a far step to the realization that on the whole it is wise not to lose the past out of our minds. There is no glory in being wiser than the original savage; there is glory in being wiser than the original sage. But in order to be wiser than he, we must have a shrewd suspicion of how wise he was. By and large, without culture, that shrewd suspicion will never be ours.

## THE OPEN SEASON FOR AMERICAN NOVELISTS

BY MEREDITH NICHOLSON

I

THIS is the open season for American novelists. The wardens are in hiding and any one with a blunderbuss and a horn of powder is entitled to all the game he can kill. The trouble was started by Mr. Edward Garnett, a poacher from abroad, who crawled under the fence and wrought great havoc before he was detected. His invasion roused the envy of scores of native hunters, and at their behest all laws for game-protection have been suspended, to satisfy the general craving for slaughter. Mr. Owen Wister on his broncho leads the field, a daring and orgulous knight, sincerely jealous for the good name of the ranges. The fact that I was once beguiled by an alluring title into purchasing one of his books in the fond hope that it would prove to be a gay romance about a lady, only to find that the heroine was, in fact, a cake, did not alter my amiable feelings toward him. I made a pious pilgrimage to the habitat of that cake and invested in numerous replicas for distribution all the way from Colorado to Maine, accompanied by copies of the novel that so adroitly advertised it — a generosity which I have refrained from mentioning to Mr. Wister or his publisher to this day.

Mr. Wister's personal experiences have touched our oldest and newest civilization, and it is not for me to quarrel with him. Nor should I be saddling Rosinante for a trot over the fearsome range had he not taken a pot shot at

poor old Democracy, that venerable offender against the world's peace and dignity. To drive Mr. Bryan and Mr. Harold Bell Wright into a lonely cleft of the foothills and rope and tie them together seems to me an act of inhumanity unworthy of a good sportsman. As I am unfamiliar with Mr. Wright's writings, I can only express my admiration for Mr. Wister's temerity in approaching them close enough to apply the branding iron. Mr. Bryan as the protagonist of Democracy may not be dismissed so easily. To be sure, he has never profited by any ballot of mine, but he has at times laid the lash with a sure hand on shoulders that needed chastisement. However, it is the free and unlimited printing of novels that here concerns us, not the consecration of silver.

Democracy is not so bad as its novels, nor, for that matter, is a constitutional monarchy. The taste of many an American has been debased by English fiction. At the risk of appearing ungracious, I fling in Mr. Garnett's teeth an armful of the writings of Mr. Hall Caine, Mrs. Barclay, and Marie Corelli. The slightest regard for the literary standards of a young and struggling republic should prompt the mother country to keep her trash at home. It is our most grievous sin that we have merely begun to manufacture our own rubbish, in a commendable spirit of building up home industries. In my youth I was prone to indulge in pirated reprints of engrossing tales of adorable curates' nieces who were for-

ever playing Cinderella at hunt balls, and breaking all the hearts in the county. They were dukes' daughters, really, changed in the cradle — Trollope, with a dash of bitters; but their effect upon me I believe to have been baneful.

A lawyer of my acquaintance used to remark in opening a conference with opposing counsel, 'I am merely thinking aloud; I don't want to be bound by anything I say.' It is a good deal in this spirit that I intrude upon the field of carnage, armed with a white flag and a Red Cross badge. The gentle condescension of foreign critics we shall overlook as lacking in novelty; moreover, Mr. Lowell disposed of that attitude once and for all time.

If anything more serious is to be required in this engagement than these casual shots from my pop-gun I hastily tender my proxy to Mr. Howells. And I am saying (in a husky aside) that if in England, our sadly myopic stepmother, any one now living has served letters with anything like the high-minded devotion of Mr. Howells, or with achievements comparable to his for variety, sincerity, and distinction, I shall be glad to pay postage for his name.

We must not call names or make faces, but address ourselves cheerfully to the business at hand. The American novel is, beyond question, in a bad way. Something is radically wrong with it. The short story, too, is under fire. Professor Canby would clap a Russian blouse on it and restore its first fine careless rapture. He makes out a good case and I cheerfully support his cause, with, however, a reservation that we try the effect of American overalls and jumper before committing ourselves fully to Slavic vestments. In my anxiety to be of service to the friends of American fiction, I am willing to act as pall-bearer or officiating minister, or even as corpse, with proper guaranties of decent burial.

## II

Our slow advance in artistic achievement has been defended on the plea that we have no background, no perspective, and that our absorption in business affairs leaves no time for that serene contemplation of life that is essential to the highest attainments. To pass the obvious baccalaureate bromide that we are inheritors of the lore of all the ages, it may be suggested that our deficiencies in the creative arts are overbalanced by the prodigious labors of a people who have lived a great drama in founding and maintaining a new social and political order within little more than a century.

Philosophers intent upon determining the causes of our failure to contribute more importantly to all the arts have suggested that our creative genius has been diverted into commercial and industrial channels; that Bell and Edison have stolen and imprisoned the Promethean fire, while the altars of the arts have been left cold. Instead of sending mankind whirling over hill and dale at a price within the reach of all, Mr. Henry Ford might have been our enlaureled Thackeray if only he had been born beneath a dancing star instead of under the fiery wheels of Ezekiel's vision.

The preachiness of our novels, of which critics complain with some bitterness, may be reprehensible, but it is not inexplicable. We are a people bred upon the Bible; it was the only book carried into the wilderness; it still has a considerable following among us, and all reports of our depravity are greatly exaggerated. We are inured to much preaching. We tolerate where we do not admire Mr. Bryan, because he is the last of the circuit riders, a tireless assailant of the devil and all his works.

I am aware of growls from the Tory

benches as I timidly venture the suggestion — fully conscious of its impidity — that existing cosmopolitan standards may not always with justice be applied to our literary performances. The late Colonel Higginson once supported this position with what strikes me as an excellent illustration. 'When,' he wrote, 'a vivacious Londoner like Mr. Andrew Lang attempts to deal with that profound imaginative creation, Arthur Dimmesdale in the *Scarlet Letter*, he fails to comprehend him from an obvious and perhaps natural want of acquaintance with the whole environment of the man. To Mr. Lang he is simply a commonplace clerical Lovelace, a dissenting clergyman caught in a shabby intrigue. But if this clever writer had known the Puritan clergy as we know them, the high priests of a Jewish theocracy, with the whole work of God in a strange land resting on their shoulders, he would have comprehended the awful tragedy in this tortured soul.'

In the same way the singular place held by Emerson in the affections of those of us who are the fortunate inheritors of the Emerson tradition can hardly be appreciated by foreign critics to whom his writings, viewed from Athens, seem curiously formless and his reasoning absurdly tangential. He may not have been a great philosopher, but he was a great philosopher for America. There were English critics who complained bitterly of Mark Twain's lack of 'form'; and yet I can imagine that his books might have lost the tang and zest we find in them if they had conformed to old-world standards.

On the other hand, the English in which our novels are written must be defended by abler pens than mine. Just why American prose is so slouchy, so lacking in distinction, touches questions that are not for this writing. I shall not even 'think aloud' about

them! And yet, so great is my anxiety to be of service and to bring as much gayety to the field as possible, that I shall venture one remark: that perhaps the demand on the part of students in our colleges to be taught to write short stories, novels, and dramas — and the demand is insistent — has obscured the importance of mastering a sound prose before any attempt is made to employ it creatively. It certainly cannot be complained that the literary impulse is lacking, when publishers, editors, and theatrical producers are invited to inspect thousands of manuscripts every year. The editor of a popular magazine declares that there are only fifteen American writers who are capable of producing a 'good' short story; and this, too, at a time when short fiction is in greater demand than ever before, and at prices that would cause Poe and De Maupassant to turn in their graves. A publisher said recently that he had examined twenty novels from one writer, not one of which he considered worth publishing.

Many, indeed, are called but few are chosen, and some reason must be found for the low level of our fiction where the output is so great. The fault is not due to unfavorable 'atmospheric' conditions, but to timidity on the part of writers in seizing upon the obvious American material. Sidney Lanier remarked of Poe that he was a great poet, but that he did not know enough, — meaning that life in its broad aspects had not moved him. A lack of 'information,' of understanding and vision, is, I should say, the fundamental weakness of the American novel. To see life steadily and whole is a large order; and a people prone, as we are, to skim lightly the bright surfaces, are not easily to be persuaded to creep to the rough edges and peer into the depths. We have not always been anxious to welcome a 'physician of the iron age'

capable of reading 'each wound, each weakness clear,' and saying 'thou ailest here and here!' It is not 'competent' for the artist to plead the unattractiveness of his material at the bar of letters; it is his business to make the best of what he finds ready to his hand. It is because we are attempting to adjust humanity to new ideals of liberty that we offer to ourselves, if not to the rest of the world, a pageant of ceaseless interest and variety.

It may be that we are too much at ease in our Zion for a deeper probing of life than our fiction has found it agreeable to make. And yet we are a far soberer people than we were when Mr. Matthew Arnold complained of our lack of intellectual seriousness. The majority has proved its soundness in a number of instances since he wrote of us. We are less impatient of self-scrutiny. Our newly awakened social consciousness finds expression in many books of real significance, and it is inevitable that our fiction shall reflect this new sobriety.

Unfortunately, since the passing of our New England Olympians, literature as a vocation has had little real dignity among us; we have had singularly few novelists who have settled themselves to the business of writing with any high or serious aim. Hawthorne as a brooding spirit has had no successor among our fictionists. Our work has been chiefly tentative, and all too often the experiments have been made with an eye on the publisher's barometer. Literary gossip is heavy with reports of record-breaking rapidity of composition. A writer who can dictate is the envy of an adoring circle; another who 'never revises' arouses even more poignant despair. The laborious Balzac tearing his proofs to pieces seems only a dingy and pitiable figure. Nobody knows the difference, and what's a well-turned sentence

more or less? I saw recently a newspaper editorial commenting derisively on a novelist's confession that he was capable of only a thousand words a day, the point being that the average newspaper writer triples this output without fatigue. Newcomers in the field can hardly fail to be impressed by these rumors of novels knocked off in a month or three months, for which astonishing sums have been paid by generous magazine editors. We shall have better fiction as soon as ambitious writers realize that novel-writing is a high calling, and that success is to be won only by those who are willing to serve seven and yet other seven years in the hope of winning 'the crown of time.'

In his happy characterization of Turgenieff and his relation to the younger French school of realists, Mr. James speaks of the 'great back-garden of his Slav imagination and his Germanic culture, into which the door constantly stood open, and the grandsons of Balzac were not, I think, particularly free to accompany him.' I am further indebted to Mr. James for certain words uttered by M. Renan of the big Russian: 'His conscience was not that of an individual to whom nature had been more or less generous; it was in some sort the conscience of a people. Before he was born he had lived for thousands of years; infinite successions of reveries had amassed themselves in the depths of his heart. No man has been as much as he the incarnation of a whole race: generations of ancestors, lost in the sleep of centuries, speechless, came through him to life and utterance.'

I make no apology for thrusting my tip dipper again into Mr. James's bubbling well for an anecdote of Flaubert, derived from Edmond de Goncourt. Flaubert was missed one fine afternoon in a house where he and De Goncourt were guests, and was found to have undressed and gone to bed to *think!*

I shall not give comfort to the enemy by any admission that our novelists lack culture in the sense that Turgeneff and the great French masters possessed it. A matter of which I may complain with more propriety is their lack of 'information' (and I hope this term is sufficiently delicate) touching the tasks and aims of America. We have been deluged with 'big' novels that are 'big' only in the publishers' advertisements. New York has lately been the scene of many novels, but the New York adumbrated in most of them is only the metropolis as exposed to the awed gaze of provincial tourists from the rubber-neck wagon. Sex, lately discovered for exploitation, has resulted only in 'arrangements' of garbage in pink and yellow, lightly sprinkled with musk.

As Rosinante stumbles over the range I am disposed to 'think aloud' a few suggestions for the benefit of those who may ask where, then, lies the material about which our novelists are so deficient in 'information.' (Just then a bullet grazed my ear: this is dangerous ground indeed! O loungers in the scorners' seat, I who am about to die salute you!) No strong hand has yet been laid upon our industrial life. It has been pecked at and trifled with, but never treated with breadth or fullness. Here we have probably the most striking social contrasts the world has ever seen; racial mixtures of bewildering complexity, the whole flung against impressive backgrounds and lighted from a thousand angles. Pennsylvania is only slightly 'spotted' on the literary map, and yet between Philadelphia and Pittsburg nearly every possible phase and condition of life is represented. Great passions are at work in the fiery aisles of the steel mills that would have kindled Dostoieffsky's imagination. A pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night marks a limitless field for the

earnest fictionist. A Balzac would find innumerable subjects awaiting him in the streets of Wilkesbarre!

At this point I must bemoan the ill luck that has carried so many American fiction writers to foreign shores. If Hawthorne had never seen Italy, but had clung to Salem, I am disposed to think American literature would be the richer. If fate had not carried Mr. Howells to Venice, but had posted him on the Ohio during the mighty struggle of the '60's; and if Mr. James had been stationed at Chicago, close to the deep currents of national feeling, what a monumental library of vital fiction they might have given us! If Mrs. Wharton's splendid gifts had been consecrated to the service of Pittsburg rather than New York and Paris, how much greater might be our debt to her!

Business in itself is not interesting; business as it reacts upon character is immensely interesting. Mineral paint has proved to be an excellent preservative for *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, which remains our best novel of business. But if paint may be turned to account, why not cotton, wool, and the rest of the trade catalogue, every item with its own distinct genesis? In *The Turmoil* Mr. Tarkington has staged under a fitting canopy of factory smoke a significant drama of the conflict between idealism and materialism. Surely the novel of business need not be left altogether to purveyors of hectic romances showing the stock exchange hitched to a cabaret.

Turning to our preoccupation with politics, we find another field that is all but fallow. Few novels of any real dignity may be tendered as exhibits in this department, and these are in a sense local, — the comprehensive, the deeply searching, has yet to be done. Mr. Churchill's *Coniston*, Mr. Page's *Red Rock*, and Mr. Brand Whitlock's *The Thirteenth District* are the happiest



experiments I recall, though possibly there are others of equal importance. Yet politics is not only a matter of constant discussion in every quarter: through and by politics many thousands solve the problem of existence. Alone of great national capitals Washington has never been made the scene of a novel of distinction. Years ago we had Mrs. Burnett's *Through One Administration*, but it failed to establish itself as a classic. George Meredith doubtless would have hated our capital; its statuary would have depressed him; but he would have found much upon which to exercise his ironic powers. The passing of Mr. Bryan was not without a certain dramatic interest; perhaps, when the newspapers have exhausted it, Mrs. Ward, who is skilled in the management of prime ministers, may find it a subject to her liking!

With all our romantic longings it is little short of amazing that we are not more fecund in schemes for romantic drama and fiction. The stage, not to say the market, waits; but the settings are dingy from much use and the characters in threadbare costumes strut forth to speak old familiar lines. Again, there is an old superstition that we are a humorous people, and yet humor is curiously absent from recent fiction. 'O. Henry' knew the way to the fountain of laughter, but contented himself with the shorter form; *Huckleberry Finn* seems destined to stand for some time as our nearest approach to a novel of typical humor. We have had David Harums and Mrs. Wiggses a-plenty, — kindly philosophers, often drawn with skill, — but the results are character sketches, not novels.

### III

It is impossible in a general view of our fiction to dissociate the novel from the short story, which, in a way, has

sapped its vitality. An astonishing number of short stories have shown a grasp of the movement, energy, and color of American life, but writers who have succeeded in this field have seemed incapable of longer flights. And the originality possessed by a great number of short-story writers seems to be shared only meagrely by those who experiment with the novel. When Macaulay's New Zealander or some venturesome Martian ravages the Library of Congress it is in the short-story division that he will find the surest key to what American life has been. There are few American novels of any period that can tip the scale against the ten best American short stories, chosen for sincerity and workmanship. It would seem that our creative talent is facile and true in miniature studies, but shrinks from an ampler canvas and a broader brush. Mr. Poole's recent novel, *The Harbor*, is a striking exception to the rule; Frank Norris's *The Pit* and *The Octopus* continue to command respect from the fact that he had a panoramic sense that led him to exercise his fine talents upon a great and important theme.

We have had, to be sure, many examples of the business and political novel, but practically all of them have been struck from the same die. A 'big' politician or a 'big' man of business, his daughter, and a lover who brazenly sets himself up to correct the morals of the powerful parent, is a popular device. Young love must suffer, but it must not meet with frustration. In these experiments (if anything so rigidly prescribed may be said to contain any element of experiment) a little realism is sweetened with much romance. In the same way the quasi-historical novel for years followed a stereotyped formula: the lover was preferably a Northern spy within the Southern lines; the heroine, a daughter of the

traditional aristocratic Southern family. Her shuddersome ride to seek General Lee's pardon for the unfortunate officer condemned to be shot at day-break, was as inevitable as measles. The geography might be reversed occasionally to give a Northern girl a chance, but in any event her brother's animosity toward the hero was always a pleasing factor. Another ancient formula lately revived with slight variations gives us a shaggy elemental man brought by shipwreck or other means into contact with gentle womanhood. In his play *The Great Divide* William Vaughn Moody invested this device with dignity and power, but it would be interesting to see what trick might be performed with the same cards if the transformed hero should finally take his departure for the bright boulevards, while the heroine seized his bow and arrow and turned joyfully to the wilderness. The present popular type portrays the girl with Daniel's weakness for venturing into fiery furnaces and among lions, — always to reappear unscathed to take her curtains before applauding audiences.

When our writers cease their futile experimenting and imitating and wake up to the possibilities of American material we shall have fewer complaints of the impotence of the American novel. We are just a little impatient of the holding of the mirror up to nature, but nevertheless we do not like to be fooled all the time. And no one is quicker than an American to 'get down to brass tacks' when he realizes that he must come to it. Realism is the natural medium through which a democracy may 'register' (to borrow a term from the screen drama) its changing emotions, its hopes and failures. We are willing to take our recreations in imaginary kingdoms, but we are blessed with a healthy curiosity as to what really is happening among our

teeming millions, and are not so blind as our foreign critics and the croakers at home would have us think as to what we do and feel and believe. But the realists must play the game straight. They must paint the wart on the sitter's nose — though he refuse to pay for the portrait! Half-hearted dallying and sidling and compromising are not getting us anywhere. The flimsiest romance is preferable to dishonest realism. It is the meretricious stuff in the guise of realism that we are all anxious to pepper with birdshot.

Having thus, I hope, appeased the realists, who are an exacting phalanx, difficult to satisfy, I feel that it is only right, just, and proper to rally for a moment the scampering hosts of the romanticists. It is deplorable that Realism should be so roused to blood-thirstiness by any intrusion upon the landscape of Romanticism's dainty frocks and fluttering ribbons. Before Realism was, Romance ruled in many kingdoms. If Romance had not been, Realism would not be. Let the Cosacks keep to their side of the river and behave like gentlemen! Others have said it who spoke with authority, and I shall not scruple to repeat, that the story for the story's sake is a perfectly decent, honorable, and praiseworthy thing. It is as old as human nature, and the desire for it will not perish till man has been recreated. Neither much argument about it, nor the limning against the gray Russian skyline of the august figures of Dostoieffsky, Tolstoy, and Turgenieff will change the faith of the many who seek in fiction cheer and recreation.

Again, I beg, let us preserve a good temper as we ponder these matters. More and more we shall have true realism; but more and more let us hope for the true romance. Stevenson's familiar contributions to the discussion are in the best vein of the cause he espous-

es; and although a New York newspaper referred to him the other day as the 'Caledonian *poseur*,' his lantern-bearers continue to signal merrily from the heights and are not to be confused with Realism's switch-lights in the railroad yards in the valley. The lords of the high pale brow in classrooms and on the critical dais are much too contemptuous of romance.<sup>1</sup> Romance we must have, to the end of time, no matter how nobly Realism may achieve. With our predisposition as a healthy-minded and cheerful people toward tales of the night-rider and the scratch of the whip-butt on the indoor, it is unfair to slap Romance on the wrist and post her off to bed like a naughty stepchild. Even the stern brow of the realist must relax at times.

Many people of discernment found pleasure in our Richard Carvels, Janice Merediths, and Hugh Wynnes. Miss Johnston's *To Have and to Hold* and *Lewis Rand* are books one may enjoy without shame. The stickler for style need not be scornful of Mrs. Catharwood's *Lazarre* and *The Romance of Dollard*. Out of Chicago came Mr. Henry Fuller's charming exotic, *The Chevalier of Pienzieri-Vani*. *Monsieur Beaucaire* and Miss Sherwood's *Daphne* proved a while ago that all the cherries have not been shaken from the tree—only the trees in these cases unfortunately were not American. Surely one of these days a new Peter Pan will fly over an American greenwood! I should bless the hand that pressed upon me for reading to-night so diverting a skit as Mr. Vielé's *The Inn of the Silver Moon*. I

<sup>1</sup> Having just read, in the August *Harper's*, Professor Canby's protest against flings at the highbrow, I must add that the term as we use it in the corn belt is one of endearment and envy. At times on wet nights I have crept in from the muddy road and thrown down my blanket on the outer fringes of the highbrow camp, and it is far from my purpose to sneer at the sound discourse I have heard there. — THE AUTHOR.

shall not even pause to argue with those who are plucking my coat-tails and whispering that these are mere trifles, too frivolous to be mentioned when the novel is the regular order of the conference. I am looking along the shelf for Stockton, the fanciful and whimsical. How pleasant it would be to meet Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine again, or to lodge for a day at another Squirrel Inn. And yet (O fame, thou fickle one!) when I asked a young lady the other day if she knew Stockton, she replied with emphasis that she did not; that 'that old quaint stuff' does n't go any more!

Having handed Realism a ticket to Pittsburg with generous stop-over privileges, I regret that I am unable to point Romance to any such promising terminus. But the realm of Romance is extra-territorial; Realism alone demands the surveyor's certificate and abstracts of title. An Irish poet once assured me that fairies are to be found everywhere; and surely somewhere between Moosehead Lake and Puget Sound some lad is piping lustily on a new silver whistle where the deer come down to drink.

#### IV

It is the fashion to attribute to the automobile and the motion picture all social phenomena not otherwise accounted for. The former has undoubtedly increased our national restlessness, and it has robbed the evening lamp of its cosy bookish intimacy. The screen drama makes possible the 'reading' of a story with the minimum amount of effort. A generation bred on the 'movies' will be impatient of the tedious methods of writers who cannot transform character by a click of the camera, but require at least four hundred pages to turn the trick. It is doubtful whether any of the quasi-historical novels

that flourished fifteen and twenty years ago and broke a succession of best-selling records would meet with anything approximating the same amiable reception if launched to-day. A trained scenario writer, unembarrassed by literary standards and intent upon nothing but action, can beat the melodramatic novelist at his own game every time. A copyright novel of adventure cannot compete with the same story at five or ten cents as presented in the epileptic drama, where it lays no burden upon the beholder's visualizing sense. The resources of the screen drama for creating thrills are inexhaustible; it draws upon the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth; and as nothing that can be pictured can be untrue, — or so the confiding 'movie' patron, unfamiliar with the tricks of the business, believes, — the screen has also the great advantage of plausibility.

The silent drama may therefore exercise a beneficent influence, if it shall prove to have shunted into a new channel of publication great numbers of stories whose justification between covers was always debatable. Already many novels of this type have been resurrected by the industrious screen producers. If, after the long list has been exhausted, we shall be spared the 'novelization' of screen scenarios in the fashion of the novelized play, we shall be rid of some of the débris that has handicapped the novelists who have meekly asked to be taken seriously.

The fiction magazines also have cut into the sales of ephemeral novels. For the price of one novel the uncritical reader may fortify himself with enough reading matter to keep him diverted for a month. The literary magazine is no longer revered as a means of fixing a household's standard of culture. The family 'favorite' used to be subscribed for every Christmas as a reli-

gious rite and maintained on the centre table in close proximity to the Bible. Nowadays the hurrying citizen approaches the magazine counter in much the same spirit in which he attacks the help-yourself lunch-trough — grabs what he likes and retires for hurried consumption. It must, however, be said for the much-execrated magazine editors that with all their faults and defaults they are at least alive to the importance and value of American material. It was they who discovered O. Henry, now recognized as a writer of significance. I should like to scribble a marginal note at this point to the effect that writers who are praised for style, those who are able to employ *otiose*, *meticulous*, and *ineluctable* with awe-inspiring inadvertence in tales of morbid introspection, are not usually those who are deeply learned in the ways and manners of that considerable body of our people who are obliged to work for a living. We must avoid snobbishness in our speculations as to the available ingredients from which American fiction must be made. Baseball players, vaudeville and motion-picture performers, ladies engaged as commercial travelers, and Potash and Perlmutter, are all legitimate subjects for the fictionist, and our millions undoubtedly prefer just now to view them humorously or romantically.

## V

In our righteous awakening to the serious plight to which our fiction has come it is not necessary, nor is it becoming, to point the slow unmoving finger of scorn at those benighted but well-meaning folk who in times past did what they could toward fashioning an American literature. We all see their errors now; we deplore their stupidity, we wish they had been quite different; but why drag their bones from the grave for defilement? Cooper and Irv-

ing meant well; there are still misguided souls who find pleasure in them. It was not Hawthorne's fault that he so bungled *The Scarlet Letter*, nor Poe's that he frittered away his time inventing the detective story. Our deep contrition must not betray us into hardness of heart against those unconscious sinners, who cooled their tea in the saucer and never heard of a samovar!

There are American novelists whose portraits I refuse to turn to the wall. Marion Crawford had very definite ideas, which he set forth in a most entertaining essay, as to what the novel should be, and he followed his formula with happy results. His *Saracinesca* still seems to me a fine romance. There was some marrow in the bones of E. W. Howe's *Story of a Country Town*. I can remember when Miss Woolson was highly regarded as a writer, and when Miss Howard's amusing *One Summer* seemed not an ignoble thing. F. J. Stimson, Thomas Nelson Page, Arthur Sherburne Hardy, Miss Murfree, Mary Hallock Foote, T. B. Aldrich, T. R. Sullivan, H. C. Bunner, Robert Grant, and Harold Frederic all labored sincerely for the cause of American fiction. F. Hopkinson Smith told a good story and told it like a gentleman. Mr. Cable's right to a place in the front rank of American novelists is not, I believe, questioned in any survey; if *The Grandissimes* and *Old Creole Days* had been written in France, he would probably be pointed to as an author well worthy of American emulation.

No doubt this list might be considerably expanded, as I am drawing from memory, and merely suggesting writers whose performances in most instances synchronize with my first reading of American novels. I do not believe we are helping our case materially by ignoring these writers as though they were a lot of poor relations whenever a for-

eign critic turns his condescending gaze in our direction.

## VI

It is a hopeful sign that we now produce one or two, or maybe three, good novels a year. The number is bound to increase as our young writers of ambition realize that technique and facility are not the only essentials of success, but that they must burrow into life — honeycomb it until their explorations carry them to the core of it. There are novels that are half good; some are disfigured by wobbly characterizations, or the patience necessary to a proper development of the theme is lacking. However, sincerity and an appreciation of the highest function of the novel as a medium for interpreting life are not so rare as the critics would have us believe.

The plea that the great American novel is being written in installments and that it will never be more than a jumble of *disjecta membra* is no longer entitled to an entry in the pleadings in *re* The People *vs.* The American Novel. I have never subscribed to the doctrine that the sun of American literature rises in Indiana and sets in Kansas. We have had much provincial fiction, and the monotony of our output would be happily varied by attempts at something of national scope. It is not to disparage the small picture that I suggest for experiment the broadly panoramic, — "a Hugo flare against the night," — but because the novel as we practice it seems so pitifully small measured by the material. I am aware of course that a hundred pages are as good as a thousand if the breath of life is in them. Flaubert, says Mr. James, *made* things big.

We must escape from this carving of cherry stones, this contentment with the day of littleness, this use of the novel as a plaything where it pretends

to be something else. And it occurs to me at this juncture that I might have saved myself a considerable expenditure of ink by stating in the first place that what the American novel really needs is a Walt Whitman to emit a barbaric yawp from the crest of the Alleghanies and proclaim a new freedom. Why could n't Mr. Robert Frost have been a novelist instead of a poet? For what I have been trying to say comes down to this: that we shall not greatly serve ourselves or the world's literature by attempts to Russianize, or Gallicize, or Anglicize our fiction, but that we must strive more earnestly to Americanize it, — to make it express with all the art we may command the

life we are living and that pretty tangible something that we call the American spirit.

The bright angels of letters never appear in answer to prayer; they come out of nowhere and knock at unwatched gates. But the wailing of jeremiads before the high altar is not calculated to soften the hearts of the gods who hand down genius from the skies. It is related that a clerk in the patent office asked to be assigned to a post in some other department on the ground that practically everything had been invented and he wanted to change before he lost his job. That was in 1833.

Courage, comrade! The songs have not all been written nor the tales all told.

## SPENDTHRIFTS

BY LAURA SPENCER PORTOR

### I

THE story I am about to tell I have never told before. The events in it took place when I was a child of fifteen, an oldish child of fifteen. I had a taste for books and dreams, and a kind of adoring love of older people; a predilection, too, for romance and wonderment. There were many things I meant to do some day.

Among my lesser resolves was one that I had held for a good many years: I mean the resolve some day to be a passenger in the absurd old-fashioned bus that had made its daily journey, ever since I could remember, from my home town to a small town quite off the railroad, and some twelve miles

away, the county-seat of that county in which my home was situated.

The bus was an extraordinary-looking vehicle. It had the air of a huge beetle. It creaked and rattled when it was in action. It had enormous dipping springs. It lunged and rolled a bit from side to side as it went. Its top bulged and had ribs across it and a low iron railing around it, convenient for the lashing of ropes to hold the packages of all kinds and sizes with which it usually went laden. There was a door at the back and there were two steps by which to enter. It had the air of being a distinguished character, even among the antiquated and entirely individual types of vehicle still common then in the little old-fashioned town.



This air was, no doubt, due chiefly to the large oval pictures painted, not without some skill, on its sides. One of these depicted the rescue of Daniel Boone by Kenton, who with the butt of a large musket was perpetually about to brain a murderous Indian; the other dealt with Smith's unchanging obligation to Pocahontas.

I hardly think Keats had more lasting enjoyment of his Grecian urn with 'brede of marble men and maidens overwrought' than I of those pictures, where, not less than in the more classic example, I saw perpetually preserved what I took to be the most thrilling and desirable of moments, death forever arrested by unending loyalty and undying affection.

But, interesting as all this was, it was by no means the heart of that strange fascination with which, for so many years, I contemplated the old beetling vehicle. Its fascination lay for me in its daily journey to parts beyond the bounds of my narrow horizon. It plied faithfully every week-day of the year, an envoy extraordinary, ambassador plenipotentiary, between another world and mine. Some day I should see that world and know it.

It must not be supposed, however, that I had in mind only the town to which the bus journeyed, the mere inconsiderable county seat. Children's imaginations, especially when the child is just emerging into all the glorious possibilities of womanhood, deal not in towns but in worlds. The *world* outside my own narrow bounds of life, that was what I meant to see and experience.

I can think of only one thing, besides the old bus, which roused my fancy to an equal degree, namely the herds of dumb cattle which were driven past my home always once and sometimes twice a week, to the stockyards which lay somewhere on the outskirts of my home town. If I close my eyes, I can

still hear on hot afternoons the dark herds trampling past, a mass of broad backs and spreading horns and wide foreheads, — and dull or occasionally frightened eyes, — and the hurrying hoofs, scuffling the dust.

I had never seen the stockyards. I was never informed very particularly about them, and by some instinct, I suppose, I never inquired too carefully. But I knew this for another world also, and dread as it was, it fascinated me. I believe the hurrying herds stood to me for a kind of world of fearful reality that I meant some day to look into, and the old picture-painted bus for a world of romance, yonder, yonder over the dip of the horizon, which not less, some day, I was determined to know.

Just how I came to take my resolve, and the events which precipitated it — all this has no bearing on the story. The story begins just where I stood that hot day in June waiting for the bus by the dusty mullens beside the pike. I had walked a good mile outside the town so that none of the townspeople would see the beginning of my adventure.

The bus was late, I think, even allowing for my anxiety. It came in sight at last, at a slow beetling pace. I held up a slim finger. But not until he was alongside did the driver begin to draw in the long reins. I ran after the bus a few paces, opened the door, climbed the high steps with a beating heart, and got in.

The driver peeked through the little peek-hole in the roof to make sure I was safe; then he called to his horses, and the vehicle lunged ahead.

The only other passengers were an old man, unknown to me, who carried a basket of eggs, and an old woman who lived somewhere outside the town and whom I recognized as her we called the 'horse-radish woman.' She stood

always on a Saturday at one corner of our town market, grinding and selling horse-radish roots, blinking with red eyes, and always wiping the tears from t' em before she could make you your change. I recognized her of course at once, but whether she knew me, I do not know. If she did, she gave not the least evidence of it, but looked out absently with squinted red-lidded eyes at the country as we jogged along.

The lovely rolling Kentucky land began to spread out on all sides. Long white curves of the pike flowed slowly behind us and were seen in glimpses through the open front windows ahead of us. Dust rose and settled over us.

A little while before we got to Latonia, the old horse-radish woman, with a tin cup she carried, knocked on the ceiling of the bus near the driver's peephole, to warn him that she wished to get out. When we arrived at Latonia and the horses were having water at the big trough, the old man with the basket of eggs also left.

But I was going all the way to the county seat and I considered these passengers much below my own level as travelers. They were merely making a convenience of the bus, you see, which just happened to go past their homes; whereas I was off for adventure, my home quite in the other direction, and the world spread wide before me.

It was with a tourist's pleasure, then, that I looked at that little grouping of houses and the elm- and poplar-shaded pike, which in those days was called, and I believe is still called, Latonia; and at the old Latonia Springs Hotel. It was a typical relic of Southern before-the-war hotel architecture, with its white pillars, its long verandas, its wide doorway, its large lawn sombered by very old shade trees.

I had known something of travel. I had lived in France for two years, at school; but there I had always had

some one to go about with me. Here, on the contrary, I was alone. I liked the flavor of the adventure; it was novel, and very stimulating. This journey, however poor a thing it might seem to others, had Audrey's superlative virtue: it was mine own. The old hotel, then, already romantic enough, took on an additional romance in my eyes.

The driver came around now from sponging his horses' heads and noses at the trough.

'Going all the way, are you?'

I nodded.

'Well, you can get out and stretch your legs if you like, for we'll be here ten minutes.'

But I did not 'like.' In the bus I felt safe enough; but if I got out — adventurous spirit though I was — I knew with unconquerable shyness that everybody would be staring at me.

I contented myself with watching the lazy coming and going of a few people; a dog snapping at flies; some chickens taking dust-baths in the road.

What a still, lazy place it was! Some one asked the time. The driver's watch had stopped. Nobody knew; it appeared not to matter. This seemed no place for clocks. A stout lame man having the look of a Southern war veteran stopped on his cane in the middle of the road, looked around carefully at the outlying country and the shadows, then took a calculating glance at the heavens.

'Well, I should reckon, colonel,' he said, addressing the stage driver, 'it mout be about twenty-two minutes past two. You gen'lly get here about two, but you was a bit late to-day, a leetle bit late, I should say maybe to the amount of about twelve minutes.'

He leaned on his cane again and began dotting his way slowly and heavily through the dust toward the hotel.

I could not have told whether he was

in jest or earnest. But as I look back on it now it seems to me curiously fitting that the little town should have had so scant dependence on timepieces, for it lay away from all the world, and there was so little to occupy the attention that the houses, the dusty pike, with its slowly lengthening and slowly shortening shadows, the fields beyond, with their great sycamores and maples, and the sky so little interrupted from edge to edge, must each, indeed, have been to those who had so long observed them, a sundial to make clocks seem mere bustling contrivances.

A big fly sailed in one of the bus windows and round and round, droning, and then out; and went with every effect of careful choice and deliberation to settle on the nose of the old dog that lay, alternately napping and snapping, four feet in the sun.

I can give you no idea of the keen enjoyment with which I noted all these details. I take pleasure now in remembering that despite the fact that I had lived in Paris, among its thrilling boulevards and monuments, and had seen some stagey Swiss villages and dramatic little French towns, this little cluster of houses known as Latonia, on a dusty pike in Kentucky, only a few miles from my own home, — this village which never a tourist would have gone to see, — was to me in that droning, incredibly quiet afternoon a very piece of romance; the air itself — I beg you to have patience with me, for really, I tell you only the truth — the very air itself being 'ambient' for me; the green fields 'amburbial'; the white clouds, so nearly at rest in the blue sky, 'huge symbols of a high romance'; the silver poplars and elms not less than 'immemorial'; and the old hotel a thing made of dreams, haunted with green and shaded memories of before-the-war days, across whose verandah might have stepped at any moment,

before my unastonished eyes, the actors in some noble human drama.

I remember, too, that my eye found some dusty marigolds, their blooms leaning through a low paling fence of one of the houses. My eye must have passed over many a marigold before that; I probably never saw one until then. I remember noting their singularity and softness of color, so individual and particular compared with the more customary reds and yellows of commoner flowers, so far more memorable and desirable and foreign; a part they seemed, too, of the quietness and strangeness and romance in the midst of which I found myself.

The bus driver was making ready to leave.

The lame war veteran, — for I still take him to have been such, — having got so far as the gate of the Latonia Hotel, was met by a long, lazy-legged darkey coming down the walk, carrying two traveling satchels. Noticeably new-looking they were, and handsome, for that part of the world. He had one under his arm, the other dangling from the same hand, which left his other hand free to manipulate a long piece of ribbon-grass which he was chewing lazily. The veteran held the gate open, the weight of his body leaning against it.

'Going away, are they?'

'Yassuh.'

There emerged from the hotel at this moment a man and a woman.

The darkey crossed the road and put the two satchels in the bus — and stood with his hand on the handle of the bus door, holding it wide open, waiting.

## II

I watched the two strangers as they approached. When they reached the bus the man assisted the woman, in a somewhat formal yet indifferent way.

She entered and took her seat nearly diagonally opposite to me. The man plunged his hand in his pocket, brought out a coin, and put it in the darkey's hand, and stooping, for he was tall, entered the bus after her. It swayed a little perilously with his weight, and rocked quite a bit before he finally comfortably seated himself directly across from me.

The driver meanwhile had swung himself up on the high driver's seat. He opened the peep-hole and looked down, then gathered the reins, and clucked to his horses, and the bus drove off.

If the town had interested me before, I forgot it now, — forgot it quite in the attention, direct and indirect, which I gave to my fellow passengers.

The man was faultlessly dressed. Such clothes were not customary in that corner of the world. The neat derby, the band of which he was even now wiping with a lavender-edged silk handkerchief, was a thing foreign to those parts at that season, cheap straw hats being rather the rule. The tips of the fingers of a pair of new tan gloves were to be seen just looking out from the left breast-pocket of his well-buttoned light gray suit. I could see that he wore a white vest and his shirt had a little hair line of purple in it. His hands were large and very white and well kept, the fingers close fitted together. On one of them a conspicuous Mexican opal smouldered in a massive, very dark gold setting.

I have no words, even to this day, to describe the woman who sat a foot or two from him and to whom he addressed his remarks in an indifferently possessive manner.

She was slight; her hair was of a light brown, her eyes of a distinct orange color. Her face sloped delicately from the forehead, which was low enough to be beautiful, and high enough to sug-

gest nobility of thought, down to the lovely line of chin. Her throat was slender and very white, rising from a turned-down Puritan collar. A Puritan cloak of dust-colored linen, with strap-pings of orange, fell away under the collar in soft and cool lines. Her brown veil had at its edge a line of orange color also. The brown was a shade lighter than her hair; the orange a shade darker than her eyes. The veil carried with it I cannot say what manner of ethereal graciousness, and fell into a wave or floating line of loveliness as she turned her head. Once, as we dipped into a shaded hollow and across a running stream, a little breeze of coolness came in at the windows. The veil, lifted by it, floated and clung like a living thing to her throat and lips, until her delicate hand put it away gently.

I watched her, very fascinated. She was a creature of another world. That she and the horse-radish woman could live on the same planet spoke volumes for the infinite scale of life.

At first these two new passengers spoke hardly at all. Once the man bent his massive figure to get a better look at the landscape from the window opposite him, and called the attention of his companion to some point in it.

'There! As I recollect it, the property is not unlike that, Louise. It rolls that way, I mean; and Felton's line comes into it just as that snake fence comes across there. It is on the other side that the vein of coal is said to begin.'

Though she gave a courteous hearing, I had the impression that she was not really interested.

She watched the country with a kind of well-bred inattentive glance. For myself I could not take my eyes off her. I watched her with that hunger for beauty which is native to the heart of a child. Above all I watched her eyes. The strange, unusual color of them was

in itself a kind of romance. She gave one the impression of being a woman unique; something rare and choice, not to be found again or elsewhere.

Once she turned her head and met my full gaze. I was embarrassed, but I need not have been. She set the matter right by addressing me with a gentle courtesy.

'Do you live out here?'

I shook my head. I meant to reply more fully in a moment when I had recovered myself; but the man spoke.

'Never heard of Thomas Felton, I suppose; did you? Used to live once in Owen County not far from here.'

I shook my head again and formed the word 'No.'

The woman gave him a gentle glance; nothing reproving, but he took it in the manner of reproof.

'Well, I did not know but she might have,' he explained. Then he settled back a little. 'Maybe some one else will get in later who does know. I thought them confoundedly stupid at the hotel. Did n't seem anxious to give any information either. Nobody knows anything in a place like that.'

There was silence again. The fields at one side of the road climbed now, here and there. Low pastures rose to be foothills. Around one of these hills a rocky road appeared sloping down to the pike. Up the road, at a little distance, was a rustic archway like an entrance to a private property. Waiting by the side of the road stood a figure strange to me, in the garb of some monastic order.

The woman did not notice him. Her glance was far off at the horizon at the other side. The man did. He regarded the stranger with a stolid bold curiosity. Then some idea of his own occurred to him, suddenly. As the bus stopped to take on this new passenger, the heavy man rose, to take advantage of its steadiness, no doubt, and stoop-

ing so as not to knock his derby against the ceiling of the vehicle, tapped imperatively on the lid of the little peep-hole, and when it was raised, spoke to the driver.

'This road leading up at the side here does n't happen to be the Chorley road, does it, that leads into Felton's woods? They said there was a road at the foot of a hill that led into some timber lands belonging to a man named Felton.'

The driver did not understand. The question had to be repeated. While the man repeated it, the Franciscan—though I am not entirely sure he was of that order—opened the door of the bus. The woman turned her head now. I saw her orange-colored eyes grow wide and large as they noted him. With habitually bent head and regarding none of us, he entered. As he seated himself in the corner he looked up, however, and his eyes met hers. I saw him start really violently. His color, which was a dark olive, with a too bright crimson under it at the cheek-bones, became suddenly ashy.

There was just that one look between them. The next instant she had turned to the other, returning from his questions with the driver. He had not seen the look that I had noted.

The Franciscan now drew his eyes away from the woman's face, fumbled in the skirt of his habit, and brought out a prayer-book which he opened with fingers that shook.

The heavy man seated himself, exactly opposite the woman, and beside me and within touch of the Franciscan. He addressed the woman.

'I just thought that that might be Chorley's road. They said it ran up a slope. It was n't, though. I thought I'd like to get a sight of the timber. We may try to make him throw that in, in payment.'

He glanced around at the Franciscan, whose eyes were now entirely on

his book, took him in, as it were, then let his glance glide off out one of the windows. After a sufficient time, a kind of courteous pause, he leaned forward a little, raised his derby the least bit, and said, 'Excuse me, but I suppose you live here?'

The Franciscan looked up, but answered nothing. The color came surging back suddenly into his face, which was haggard. There was a noncommittal look in his eyes, as though his lips were to say, 'I beg your pardon.'

'I supposed you lived here,' the other said, 'and I thought you might just happen to know a man named Felton. He came originally from Owen County. We are on here from New York. We are strangers and we know nothing of this country. You don't happen to know' —

The Franciscan gave a gentle smile, raised one slim hand, which yet trembled visibly, — a fine deprecating gesture.

'Pardon, m'sieu!'

'Oh, I see.' The other touched his hat with a little motion of withdrawal and clumsy apology. 'I see. I did n't know you were French. I don't speak French myself. Wish I did! Excuse me. Excuse me.'

Here was an occasion! The adventure was turning squarely toward me. I knew French; I was proud of it and eager to offer my services. I could perfectly well act as translator, interpreter for these two. Moreover, it would give me that greatly to be desired thing, the attention of this beautiful woman. Yet I did not dare all this at once. I would wait a moment. How should I break into the conversation? A child of fifteen, however oldish, is shy. Would it be proper for me to say, 'Excuse me, but' —

As I was thinking of it with a kind of tumult of pride and shyness, the man turned to the woman.

'Look here, Louise; that's a fact! You speak French! Ask him if he knows Thomas Felton's property. Tell him it's Felton who lived over in Owen County and used to be a wealthy man.'

She turned her clear eyes to the Franciscan and spoke in a pure Parisian French.

'This man, my husband, wishes me to ask if you know a Thomas Felton who has property out here in this direction.' In the same tone exactly, she added, 'Do not let him suspect that you know me.'

'Let him think' — the reply came in pure French also — 'that I speak no English. In this way you and I can converse together.'

Her wonderful orange-colored eyes quivered the least bit as she drew them away from the Franciscan and met the waiting eyes of her husband.

She spoke with perfect composure, however.

'He says he believes there was such a man hereabouts some years ago.'

Her husband turned quickly as though he himself would further address the Franciscan; then, recollecting that he knew no French, he appealed to her again.

'Now Louise, look here. Try to get it straight. As I told you, there are two men of that name, a nephew and an uncle. It's the uncle I want to get hold of. He is the man who owns the property we want. Ask this man how old this Felton is, this man he knows; I can tell by that.'

She turned again to the Franciscan, and spoke again in French. Indeed they spoke nothing else but that sweet and flowing language, a knowledge of which, put me, without my will, in league with them.

'How do you happen to be here?' she questioned.

'I joined the order after I left you,' he said. 'That is, they simply allow



me to live with them, chiefly on account of my name, I think; that, and, I think, as an act of mercy. As a kind of lay brother — it is simple. But, this man — he is your husband?’

‘Yes, I have been married to him eight months.’

‘In God’s name!’ he said, but in a perfectly even conversational tone. ‘And you have suffered. Of course you have suffered.’

They used throughout their conversation, as I have not indicated here, because it sounds forced in English, the familiar and gentle *tutoiement*, the thee-and-thouing of the French.

The husband, understanding nothing of what they said, was watching the two with interest; his small eyes were eager in his heavy face; he was waiting for his answer.

‘Do not let us talk too long,’ the Franciscan said, and turned with a faintly courteous smile, as though to include the heavy man in the conversation. ‘Ask me some more questions,’ he said to the woman; ‘get him to ask some more questions, I mean. In that way we shall have a little time to talk together.’

She addressed her husband.

‘He is not quite sure. He thinks, however, the man he has in mind has a gray beard.’

Her husband drew his large flat fingers down his heavy chin twice, as though stroking an imaginary beard of his own, thoughtfully; his eyes narrowed even more, very speculatively.

‘I see, I see! Well now, like as not it’s the same one.’ Then he put his hands on his knees and leaned forward as though really addressing himself to the business. ‘Look here, Louise, you ask him if this man he knows ever had anything to do with a railway — a railway out West and coal lands out there.’

‘You must give me time. Let me

see! How does one say all that? My French is not so fluent as it once was. I shall have to get at it in a round-about way. Have patience.’

‘Take your time,’ he said, leaning back, ‘only get at it if you can. It’s important.’

She turned now to the Franciscan. But it was he rather who addressed her.

‘But what are you going to do about this horrible marriage?’

‘Nothing, nothing at all.’

‘But, good God, it is desecration. It is like defiling the bread and wine of communion. Does this man kiss you?’

‘He owns the better part of two railroads,’ she said, with a kind of pitiful look in her eyes. ‘He is here now to push to the wall — if he can — a man already overtaken by mischance and misfortune.’

‘Why do you evade?’ said the other.

‘He does of course touch you, he owns you, along with the better part of two railroads. He fondles you at his pleasure. I would not have thought it possible. Not you; not you.’

‘You forget,’ she said, and still her voice kept the strangely even tone. ‘My sister was ill, dying, I thought. I could give her everything by this means. I did give her everything. She is better now, as well as she will ever be. She could not bear poverty; it was killing her. She never could. She is better.’

‘But at what horrible, what hellish cost!’ he replied. ‘She was selfish always and complaining; one of the useless ones; and moreover, answer me, does one buy a cracked pitcher, doomed to be broken at any rate, with the most exquisite pearl in the world, priceless above ten sultans’ ransoms? Were it not so horrible it would be ridiculous. Does one, I ask you, do a thing like that?’

She turned to her husband.

‘He says he believes the man you

ask about was once engaged in a large coal-mining deal in the West.'

'Yes,' said the heavy man eagerly, leaning forward again to listen to what he could not understand, but with as keen attention as though he comprehended fully.

'Wait and I will ask him more.'

Again she turned to the other.

'But you, you also have bought unworthy things at fearful cost?'

'What? In God's name, what have I bought? I who renounced everything, who have nothing left in this world but the memory of your face and the certainty of death?'

'You bought for yourself the approval of what you may choose to call your conscience,' she said in the same almost monotonous, even voice. 'You bought freedom from the world's censure, freedom from what the world would have said had you married me.'

He flung out a trembling hand. I thought it would have betrayed him.

'That! Will you bring up that old mad folly of yours? Would you hope to persuade me it was not my duty to renounce you? They told me I could not possibly get well. You see for yourself. You see now how I am changed. I shall last now, perhaps, six months. You had nothing. I had nothing. What would have become of you, not to speak of all the horror? It was clearly my duty. I leave it to any man.'

'Yes; always that. The opinion of others,' she said, but even still without emotion. 'I do not care for the opinion of a worldful. I accept the fact that you could not get well. I tell you it does not matter. It was for each other God made us; without any regard to circumstance.'

'A woman's reason is not reason,' he said. 'Any man would tell you it was my duty to give you up. The world is not made as you would have it.'

'Listen,' she said. (She interrupted

herself to glance with a smile at her husband, and said to him in English, 'I am trying to explain to him. He is a little dull. He does not understand.') 'Listen,' — she spoke again to the other. 'Be reasonable. See it as it is. Do not cheat yourself into thinking this horrible failure of ours was a virtue. Review the facts with me and face them. These are they: we compromised with life; and in a cowardly fashion. I married, to buy my sister health, because I had not the courage to see her suffer. You renounced me and went away so that you might have a certain peace of mind, and because you had not the courage to go counter to tradition and the world's approval. What would the world have said, — a man as ill as you were to accept the life and devotion of a woman? It was that that tormented and swayed you. You left me, and went away to escape that. We both bought a certain worldly peace of mind, and a kind of conventional self-approval. And with what? With what did we buy these trifling things? What price did we pay for them? We bought them with the entire wealth and treasure God had given us — the most precious in his treasures, beside which kings' ransoms are as nothing. We bought these trifles, these worthless baubles, with the priceless love we had for each other. He gave it to us in such ample measure, you remember. And what did we do with it? What have we to show for it now? In God's world are there to be found, do you think, two such spendthrifts?'

'There! It is your old way,' he replied. 'You speak always in figures like a poet. It is misleading. Deal only with the facts. I leave them to any one. I was to die of a lingering illness. I had no money. I had only a wealth of horrors to drag you through. A slow death it was to be. You would have had two years of that.'

'Two years,' she repeated. 'I have been married eight months; and I think those eight months have been twice eight years. And two years, two years together, you and I! But oh, if it had been one year only; if we had had but one year together. Only one year!' There was a kind of pleading in her voice. 'Only one year! It is as though one were to say "only springtime," — "only love," — "only heaven," — "only God!"'

'What does he say?' said her husband. Perhaps he was curious at the tone of her voice; or merely impatient at the length of their conversation.

'Tell him anything,' said the other. 'We must converse at any cost. Tell him anything you like; only do not cease to speak to me.'

She turned to her husband.

'He is quite interesting. He thinks he used to know this man when he was a child; that his father had some dealings with him in that very coal affair in Illinois. Let me question him a little more. I will tell you by and by. We must not seem to be too curious. Do not interrupt me; just let me lead him on. It may take a few moments.'

The other began now, without waiting for her to take up the conversation.

'But I tell you, you do not see the thing as it is. It would have been a criminal thing for a man doomed as I was, to link his life with a woman like you, frail, exquisite, young, beautiful, the very rose of the world. Is it permissible for a man to drag a woman with him to the scaffold, even for love? I leave it to any man.'

'Yes, to any man,' — her reply was quick on his, — 'but you dare not leave it to a woman. Any man would tell you it is not permissible that one about to die should lay his hand in that of the woman he loves. And any man would grant you, that if the woman is his wife, — if that tradition has bound

them, — then it is his right and her duty that they should share fatality, even though they have not the high calling of love. If this man who is my husband were stricken, you, even you, would expect me' —

The sentence broke and she left it as though there could be no need of making the truth plainer. Instead, she folded her hands tensely.

'But, oh, let us not argue. We have squandered God's treasure, you and I. We have squandered it for the sake of convention, for old precedents, for men's opinions; just as this man, my husband, buys railway shares and mining properties at the fearful price of his honor, his human kindness, his soul. You despise him and shrink from him. Truly, I cannot, except when he lays his hand upon me; for we are no better than he. That is the horrible part of it. We are all three spendthrifts, the three of us, here in this little space. But oh, what new folly! Only think of our spending these precious, precious moments in argument. Shall we never have done being wasteful!'

He fell in with her thought immediately.

'You love me still, then.'

'Yes, always.'

'Yet I have not the right, even now, to so much as touch your hand.'

'No; yet my hand lies in yours by the hour. These are things one cannot keep from God.'

'Do you know' — his voice was even — 'I cannot help wondering if the little girl over there in the corner just might possibly understand.'

'No; I think not,' she said gently; 'besides, if she did, it would not matter.'

'No, perhaps not. I think she would say nothing. I notice that her eyes are shaped somewhat like yours. Some day some man will love her also.'

'Yes, without doubt. But it is of our-

selves I would talk. If there is a heaven, there, there, you shall some day possess me!

Her husband broke in now, —

‘Are you finding out anything?’

‘Yes, quite a little!’ She smiled palely, then turned back to the other.

‘How can you lie to him like that!’ he said. ‘And I also.’

‘We waste time,’ she urged. ‘A carriage meets us at the next town. From there he and I are to drive over to the adjoining county. You and I have only a few moments more left at the most in this world together.’

‘Yes.’ His fingers interlaced tightly, resting in his lap. ‘Let us not argue any more. You remember the night by the river, O my beloved?’

‘As though it were the only night in the world.’

‘I remember that at first I dared not even be near you; I sat on the bank a little away from you,’ he continued; ‘but by and by the moon came up and all around us was stillness and beauty; the sheep slept in the pasture; the hills were all cool with the light of the moon; I have not forgot; I can never forget — I dared just to lay the tips of my fingers on the hem of your gown. You did not notice that. It was as though I had dared lay my hand on the garment of God, but sweeter, sweeter even than that.’

‘Oh yes, I saw. I saw and felt. And it was exactly as though by that token God had chosen me among women, as he chose the Virgin; only, he chose me there in the moonlight, not for glory and suffering as he chose her, but just for love. He chose and called me for that. I was to love you; was chosen by that touch to love you; only you, among a thousand; only you in all the world of many men. And then, just then, the nightingale, like some little feathered angel of annunciation, broke into song in the trees near by.’

‘Yes; and to me it was as though white fire were all about you — as about some altar; and I was afraid to touch you. I dared not. You were too beautiful, too glorious. The night was too still, too holy. And then, at last, I reached out my hand and dared, as though one were to try a miracle. I laid it on yours. And still I lived. And then, the whole scenery of earth and heaven shifted, after that, — as you know. You leaned and kissed me. Everything was changed forever.’

‘Yes; I know. After that there was nothing but the night and the silence, and thou and I. Even the nightingale did not sing.’

‘Yes.’

‘And since that night there has been no one else in the world but only thou and I. Other people, do they not seem like shadows, myriads of shadows, like the inconsiderable leaves of a forest that shall fade and fall and be renewed — but only leaves and shadows?’

‘Only thou and I,’ he assented, ‘in the wide forest, in the woods of the world. And soon, soon, soon, I shall walk the woods no more.’

‘Since you must go, do not be discomfited,’ she replied; ‘nor trouble at all this. If as a kind of lasting torment, to match my own, you were permitted, after death, to be near, to see this man kiss and possess me, you have but to remember the night by the river in the moonlight. You are but to remember that this is the only night in the world; that there are no others; that the rest are dreams; that no lips but yours have ever really touched mine.’ Her voice was beautiful, rich; a kind of farewell in itself. ‘You must promise me this.’

Her husband leaned forward a little impatiently.

‘We are nearly there. Can’t you find out, Louise, what I want you to? The thing I want to know is whether he still has an interest in the coal lands. If he

has it will be worth a good many thousands. Now do your best. Try.'

'But you must have patience,' she said, 'I am trying to find out something.'

'I cannot quite get it out of my head,' said the other, 'that we deserve to be damned for this. Does not your conscience misgive you?'

'No; rather my honor. I have a hatred of deception. It is the only time in my life that I have deceived. And you?'

'I might do penance.' He smiled, I thought. He drew the cord of his habit through his slim transparent fingers until one of the knots rested in his palms.

'You could not really mean anything so horrible! And your body, so slim, so beautiful, that I have loved!'

His voice, though it was low, rang also, now, — quivered almost.

'You forget that the stripes might be sweet, my well-beloved,' — I could see that his lips trembled, — 'something still suffered for your sake.'

She put her hand to her brow, a little lovely gesture, as though all this troubled her, perhaps dazed her; or perhaps it was some old recollection in his voice.

'How absurd we are! We shall be parting soon.'

'Yes,' he said, 'for always. What can I say to you that you will remember?'

'Only say that you can never forget the night by the river.'

'I can never forget it.'

Something in his words fell final, like a fate.

She turned now to her husband. The stage was already slowing up.

'Is this the county seat? I have found out quite a great deal. I will tell you more about the coal lands as we drive. He is an interesting man.'

Suddenly, from having been intently upon them, my attention became aware of a familiar sound, the thudding hundred-hoofed sound of an approaching

herd; I had been so absorbed in the strange world of the other happening that I had not known of their approach. Almost suddenly they were about us, black and brown backs, spreading horns, broad wet noses, massive foreheads.

The driver looked down through the little hole reassuringly.

'Just wait till they get past. They're on their way to the stockyards!'

We waited, the four of us, huddled together, with a strange kind of intimacy, it seemed, in the bus, while the trampling mass of driven dumb creatures surged and swayed around us, and finally struggled painfully by, each crowding the other, on their way to death. The woman watched them with eyes in which there met fear and pity.

With the last of the herd past, the driver was already opening the stage door. The woman's husband rose, stooping.

'If you'll allow me I'll get out first with these.'

He took the satchels and got out of the bus, heavily.

He turned to assist the woman. She did not give him her hand at once. The Franciscan drew back a little to let her pass. She paused the fraction of a moment and gave her hand to him.

'Good-bye.'

When she was beside the large man on the road, he also offered his hand to the Franciscan.

'Thank you; thank you very much indeed.'

He turned. 'Guess that's our surrey over there, Louise.' The darkey driver of the surrey hurried toward him. 'Yes; take these.'

The woman followed him. She did not look back. He assisted her into the surrey and followed, himself, his weight bending it heavily to one side as he entered.

I saw them drive away, along a

broad cross-road into the lovely rolling country, her brown veil floating a little, unknown to her, but like a living thing, with a little wild waving of its folds. The Franciscan I saw follow a road in another direction. The curve of it soon hid him. I did not see him again.

### III

I remained in the bus. We were to stay only a little while at the county seat, for we were already late. New horses were put to the pole, and within twenty minutes we were driving over the same road by which we had come.

An old gentleman who, I think, was a lawyer returning from county court, was the only other occupant and he was soon dozing. It was a strange ride back. When we came to Latonia the light was so altered as to make a new and lovely adventure of it. The sun was not yet set, but the sunlight had withdrawn to the tops of the tall trees. Below, the hotel lawn was cool, almost twilit, mysterious in shadows. It was there only a little while ago that I had first seen these two coming down the path to enter the bus. The last few hours had changed life for me entirely. Though I did not know it at the time, I know now that the two worlds of reality and of romance—before that distinct and separate in my mind and all untried—were forever mingled with each other now, for me, and were one with my own life. I shall never henceforth be able to see a herd of cattle on a dusty road without seeing those two in their last meeting, nor shall I ever see any who remind me of him or her without a sense of love and death and the inevitable.

This is a true story. I have never told it before. I have kept it locked

away as something too cherished, too intimate to share with any one. There always seemed to me a finality about it beyond any story I could ever read. Yet I am telling it now, partly from a sense of honor, partly from a hidden hope; because it was not, after all, finished that day. She may still be living. This may chance to meet her eye. If so, I would have her know that the dark-eyed child who rode with them that day came in time, by that strange chance, so much more strange in life than in any story, to meet just what she had met: to meet Love, the glorious and radiant presence, only to find that there walked beside Love,—road-companions of the way,—Poverty, and one whose face had all the likeness of Death. And I would have her know that, because of that day, and because of the memory of her in my heart, so long cherished, I, at the chosen moment, laid my hand in that of the shining Presence,—despite those other presences,—to go with it, in what paths soever it might lead me.

It is so, I take it, life deals with us more largely than we know. Fools in our folly; spendthrifts though we may be, throwing priceless wisdom away to the winds, as these two had done; wasting our wealth and our substance of joy irretrievably; careless of God's treasure intrusted to us; squandering gold worth the ransom of all the kings of the earth, and this for some trifling thing, some inconsiderable bauble; yet God, unknown to us, does most usually, no doubt, save from our wrecked fortunes and our lost argosies something—something precious still, and above price—with which, at a future day, with merciful largesse of wisdom and of love, some other soul may yet be blest and may yet be enriched, as it were by all the treasure of the earth.



## DEMOCRACY AND LITERATURE

BY CHARLES H. A. WAGER

### I

READING, some time ago, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, I came upon this sentence: 'Democracy is full of menace to the finer hopes of civilization.' The idea, of course, is not a new one, and yet I found myself dwelling on it as if it had never been expressed before. Democracy! The panacea of all social diseases, the manifest destiny of the modern world, a political creed held by millions of people with a fervor that hardly any religious creed now commands—democracy 'full of menace to the finer hopes of civilization'!

Instinctively I asked myself, 'What are those hopes that even seem to be incompatible with this supreme political good? Are they hopes that we have a right to cherish? If it is true, as Aristotle thought, that man cannot reach the perfection of which his nature is capable unless he unites with other men to constitute a state; if the state, in other words, is the indispensable condition of the perfection of human nature; and if the form of that state toward which humanity is tending is unmistakably democratic, what are we to think of hopes, however lofty, to which such a state offers no promise of fulfillment? Is it possible that democracy and civilization are not quite the same thing? Is it possible that civilization is a larger, a more inclusive thing than democracy, of more irresistible authority and of wider scope?'

These are some of the questions to which Gissing's quiet sentence gave rise

in my mind, and to which I venture to think that I have found answers valid for those, at least, whose democracy is 'tempered,' as Arnold said his liberalism was, 'by experience, reflection, and renouncement.'

For most of us, the democratic idea is not so tempered. We live in a great democracy, cut off by miles of ocean from contact with any other form of society. We breathe democratic air. We view everything, instinctively and necessarily, from the democratic angle. Our notions of education, of social relations, of public and private behavior are different from what they would be under another system of government. It may be, even, that our notions of religion are different, or will become so. Indeed, we are invited by certain philosophers of the Bergsonian school to abandon our monarchical theology and to bring our religion into line with our politics and our science. It is intimated that 'Thy kingdom come' is a prayer that sounds oddly on democratic lips. For, just as the democratic state is a heterogeneous mass of humanity, moving, without plan or prevision, toward an end which no one can foresee; just as in the natural world, even in that part of it which we have been accustomed to call inanimate, there are evidences of life, perhaps of conscious life, striving blindly toward an unknown goal; so He whom we name God, far from being the architect and sovereign of the universe, is only this creative evolutionary force in man and nature, working out, He too,

his mysterious destiny. Biology, sociology, and theology, as seen with democratic eyes, are all engaged in the same task, 'the effort to break down all barriers, to link all the orders of the world together in an essential oneness of quality and process.'<sup>1</sup>

Evidently, then, if we are to be good democrats at church as well as in the laboratory and at the polls, we must rid ourselves of our theological inconsistency, and bring ourselves, if we can, to accept the God of democracy. And so our philosophical system comes to be of a beautiful completeness. As we find our own essence in the plant, the animal, the stone; as our sole aim is to detect 'the essential oneness of quality and process' in nature and society, so we find nothing more than this in the heavenly places. Our God, the God of democracy, is but our democratic selves writ large.

But it is not my purpose to discuss this interesting and — from certain points of view — amusing hypothesis. The 'democratic conception of God' may be safely left to the theologians — at least it may be safely left to some of them. I wish only to point out that this — a democracy of such reach and consistency as this — is what we appear to be coming to; but it is a consoling reflection that we may after all be saved from the extreme logic of our theory by those amiable weaknesses of our nature which have saved us so often, — our indolence, our slender reasoning faculty, and our incorrigible sense of humor.

## II

There are many minds, perhaps the majority of those most heartily committed to the democratic idea, to whom

<sup>1</sup> PROFESSOR H. A. OVERSTREET, 'The Democratic Conception of God.' *Hibbert Journal*, March, 1913. — THE AUTHOR.

it will seem the veriest trifling to inquire, as I must proceed to do, what is to be the place of literature in a world-order like this. And by literature, I hasten to say, I mean those works in which the deepest mind of man has been expressed — his highest hope, his sternest conviction, his most radiant aspiration, his profoundest intuition, his most soaring imagination, his most poignant anguish, his most ecstatic joy. I do not mean the tales and ditties by which the rank and file of men beguile their empty leisure. I mean the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles and Shakespeare, the *Divine Comedy* and *Paradise Lost* and *Faust*. I mean those works which demand the exercise of powers of heart and mind at their best, the works in which the keenest-sighted and highest-hearted of men find most profit, works which are not exhausted by generations of students during years of study, works for the comprehension of which the utmost refinement and subtlety of mind are no less necessary than grasp and vigor; works, in short, which but one man in a century is capable of writing and but few, comparatively, in a generation are capable of fully understanding.

For it is an absurd notion that these great works are classics because they are popular. They are classics because the best minds of every age have found them an inexhaustible source of power and beauty. I do not forget such encouraging experiences as those of Miss MacCracken, who found tenement-dwellers who knew by the light of nature that William Shakespeare was a true interpreter of the human heart and Mr. Hall Caine a false one. But take the mass of men and women, by and large, who make up our democratic world; take even the mass of those persons who are said to be 'readers'; take the average man of business, the

YRABELL LIBRARY

U. M. LIBRARY

average professional man, the average woman immersed in the social duties of a town small or large, and apply to them the practical test, — the only one that counts, — do they instinctively prefer Shakespeare to Mr. Pinero, Milton to Mr. John Masefield, Thackeray to Mr. Winston Churchill, and they will candidly answer that they do not.

It is not necessary to apologize for a preference for the modern in literature; but such a test is conclusive that literature, in the sense in which I use the term, is not a popular and an easy thing, a thing which appeals naturally to the man in the street, but a highly select and exacting thing, a thing — dare I venture it? — which has most of the qualities that we stigmatize as aristocratic.

Now, in the thorough-going democracy of the future to which all the signs are pointing, literature, in this sense, seems likely to be an anachronism. It is an aristocratic discord in the great hymn — a little monotonous, it must be granted — that we are raising to 'the essential oneness of quality and process.' In a society where the whole emphasis is on resemblances rather than on differences; where there is no master, no guide; where it is collective, not individual wisdom that practically counts; where, if there be an end toward which the whole is moving, no one can possibly know what it is; where, practically speaking, the movement is itself the end, — in a world like this, what has literature to do, literature, in which the differences, the distinctions between things are all-important; in which the individual is everything, the group little or nothing; in which an end, foreseen from the beginning, conditions all movement; in which an intelligible order is the *sine qua non*; in which permanence, stability, completeness are the essentials? The 'democratic con-

ception of God' has little in common with St. James's idea of a Being 'in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning'; yet it is of such a Being that literature, in the high sense, inevitably reminds us.

Perhaps, after all, Matthew Arnold's somewhat daring prophecy stands a chance of fulfillment. More than thirty years ago he wrote: 'The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry . . . our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay. Our religion has materialized itself in the fact, in the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact, and now the fact is failing it. . . . The strongest part of our religion to-day is its unconscious poetry.' 'The priest departs,' cries Walt Whitman; 'the divine literatus comes.' While we are probably not ready yet to substitute even Dante's or Milton's poem for the four Gospels, still, if we must choose between the democratic chaos and the *Divine Comedy* as a symbol for deity, we should have little difficulty, I think, in making a choice.

But I am reminded that literature, too, illustrates 'the essential oneness of quality and process.' Poetry is only another product of the democratic chaos. If the scholars are right, its beginnings were humble enough. In some rude primeval community the folk gather to celebrate a victory in battle or the fame of a dead warrior. They begin, all together, an exultant or a solemn rhythmic dance. Presently some one utters a cry which expresses their common sense of triumph or grief. It is caught up and repeated and varied, adapted to the movement of the dancing band. Presently another participant contributes a cry, which is added to the first. This process is repeated again and again, as the tribe feels the need of expressing its emotions rhythmically, until, little by little, something like an ode or hymn is developed by

the whole community working under the inspiration of a common emotion. And so the majesty of Homer and Pindar is born.

It is plain that this process admirably exemplifies the growth of the democratic state, the collective work of a whole people, coöperating toward an end that is unforeseen. But here the parallel ceases. After all, there are still some steps to take from the highest achievement of the folk working collectively, to the Odes of Pindar. With the best democratic intentions in the world, we cannot resist the conviction that at some stage of the process there has intervened a gifted individual; and from that point on, the evolving ode is no longer a communal but an individual affair. Indeed, if strict justice were done, it seems to me that we should attach more importance than we do to that first inarticulate cry which began the evolution. The poor fellow who made it had one, at least, and that an important one, of the qualifications of the poet; he felt the emotion which his companions felt, but, unlike them, he was able to express it. However, we will waive this objection to the illustration, and grant that, at least up to the moment of the intervention of the individual singer, poetry, too, illustrates 'the essential oneness of quality and process,' that poetry, too, is democratic.

As I was thinking over these things one day in our college library, my eye fell upon the portrait bust of an unknown Roman priest or citizen, who gazes benignantly, if somewhat satirically, upon the intellectual activity going on about him; and, somehow, in the light of his fine smile, 'the essential oneness of quality and process,' at least as applied to art, began to seem less important. There he was, the finished product of a great civilization, rendered by the artist with a subtle

truth which is itself the mark of a high distinction. And he seemed to say to me, 'Is the process by which I became what you see so all-important as to make you forget what I am? No doubt, at bottom I am, as one of your own poets has said, "blood-brother to the stone"; but practically, what of it? Between that stage and this, there have intervened how many individuals of the highest and rarest gifts! It is they who have made me what I am, and without them I should have been little more than those rude, unhewn resemblances to man that stand out from bluff or boulder on the untraveled mountain-side.'

The lesson to me, at any rate, is plain. Art, literature, however communal in origin, are, in the only form in which they concern us, individual in essence, and few things are more absurd than to talk of their democratic origin, with our Roman friend before us and the literature of all the ages on the shelves about us.

Now it is plain, not only that the democratic spirit in its extreme form is alien to the essential quality of literature, but that it implies a different ideal of humanity from that of the older civilization which it is superseding, an ideal that is summed up succinctly in Walt Whitman's phrase 'the divine average.' The older civilization assumed strength, vigor, boldness, courage, all the aggressive masculine virtues, as, of course, elements in its human ideal; but it added to these grace and refinement of expression, delicacy of perception and taste, intellectual balance and self-restraint, patient submission to mental discipline — in short, all that class of qualities which were believed to mark the cultivated man; qualities, I need hardly observe, which are not common or easily attainable or within the reach of every one. Democratic culture, says Whitman, — and in quoting

Whitman I am, of course, quoting the very foremost exponent of the relation of literature to the new age, — 'must have for its spinal meaning the formation of typical personality of character, eligible to the uses of the high average of men — and *not* restricted by conditions ineligible to the masses. The best culture will always be that of the manly and courageous instincts, and loving perceptions, and of self-respect.'

I am not disposed to set one of these ideals of culture over against the other, much less to decide between them. But what, if the newer ideal prevails, is to become of literature? What place in such a moral scheme of things is there for a form of human activity which knows nothing of averages; which does not demand, first of all, courage and loving perceptions and self-respect, but delicacy and subtlety and poise of mind and imaginative power; which implies distinction and proclaims privilege?

It is, of course, possible to deny that I have correctly described literature. I only maintain that I have described it as it once was understood. And if this be indeed literature, how can it be expected to thrive in the new democracy? Is it conceivable that we are going to whistle down the wind the fruit of ages of civilization? Life is wasteful, we know, but is it really as wasteful as that? Has humanity been on a false tack all these centuries? It seems incredible, yet it looks as if, for a long time to come, literature, in the highest sense of the word, could do little more than feed the regrets of a few backward-looking, over-sophisticated persons for whom democracy has no use.

There died two years ago in California a gentleman who had given more than thirty years of his life to the conduct of a literary journal, — the only purely critical journal which this country boasts. I allude to Mr. Francis Browne, the editor of *The Dial*. He

had not devoted those thirty years to creative literature, so-called. His name was not widely known and he did not seek reputation. He had no fortune and he sought none. For thirty years he sacrificed fame and money and health to keeping alive a bi-monthly literary review. And for what? In order that a few hundred persons might be supplied with trustworthy accounts of new and important books. He was himself a man of rare distinction of mind. He loved literature as its greatest lovers have loved it, — with something like passion. He loved literature as Macaulay loved it, and Arnold and Norton. He knew his poets by heart and quoted them with endless zest. What place will there be, I ask, for a Francis Browne in the new democratic world?

This is, to be sure, no grave charge to bring against the new era. More than one admirable human type seems to have perished, or to survive here and there only in a few belated individuals to whom we refer as statesmen or gentlemen or men of letters 'of the old school.' I chose Mr. Browne merely as an excellent example of what we used to mean by the man of letters, to make it plain how little the type is suited to the cultural requirements of democracy as Whitman has outlined them.

But Whitman, of course, is assured that democracy will produce its own literature to suit the needs of its new human type. The old literature expresses a conception of life which he stigmatizes as feudal, which is ours no longer. It must give way to an art which shall be indeed the voice of the new world. 'Democracy can never prove itself beyond cavil,' he says, 'until it founds and luxuriously grows its own forms of art, poems, schools, theology, displacing all that exists, or that has been produced anywhere in the past, under opposite influences.'

This is consoling. We had begun to fear that the new democratic era was to have no art, and I cannot help feeling that, in strict logic, it will have no right to any. Yet Whitman will mitigate the inevitable aristocracy of literature as far as possible.

I speak the pass-word primeval,

I give the sign of democracy.

I will accept nothing which all cannot have  
their counterpart of on the same terms.

Ah! democracy, then, is safe. If its prophet will accept from its poets only that which every one may have in equal measure, we may be sure that the sweet democratic harmony will not be seriously interrupted. Great literature is not to be had on those terms.

### III

And this brings me to the point at which I have been aiming. I do not, of course, believe that literature is about to perish from the face of the earth, nor do I believe that what has been meant in the past by literature is to be superseded by what Whitman means by it. It is evident, indeed, that a democratic era is upon us, in which so aristocratic a product as literature will not easily thrive. It is evident, moreover, that this era will have, that it already has, at least two marked and serious defects. Those two defects I believe that literature is in a position, in some measure, to remedy, and that it is the service which literature can perform for democracy which will save literature in a democratic world. For its capacity to perform this service proves that literature belongs to a larger, a more inclusive order of things than democracy, than any form of government, than any single scheme of life. Literature belongs to the order of civilization. Empires, monarchies, anarchies, even democracies pass, but civilization abides. It has been won by the

coöperative effort of races and nations and individuals without number, who agreed in but one thing, their common hope and aim. Citizens of no mean city were they all, whatever their dress and tongue and customs; citizens of a continuing city, as broad as the world, as old as recorded time, as endless as humanity. Literature, in the great sense, knows no bounds of time or place, and it is therefore in a position to correct, to restrain, to enlarge systems of a less ample scope. There have always been, there will always be persons who acknowledge no narrower allegiance than literature itself acknowledges, the allegiance of civilization. Never will it come to pass in the best regulated, the most thoroughly consistent state that every one will bow the knee to Baal, by whatever name he may be called. Some persons there will always be, and they not the least worthy, who will confess no sovereignty but the highest, and those persons are the hope of literature, and perhaps the hope of democracy as well.

Now the two defects of democracy to which I have alluded, and the existence of which will be denied by no thoughtful person, are these: the lack of perspective and the lack of discrimination. Democrats, I suppose, are not more ignorant of history than other men. They know that political and social wisdom did not come into the world with the French and American revolutions. Yet there is something in the aggressive hopefulness of the democratic spirit which leads men practically to ignore their political inheritance, to speak always of the future, never of the past except to discredit it; to talk much of hope and little of memory. The immediate problem is so pressing, the needs of every day are so insistent, that even the wise may be pardoned if, in Burke's phrase, they consult their invention and reject their



experience. It is not remarkable, then, if the less wise, who after all make up the body of the state, fail to remember that there is any experience to reject; if, slightly varying the patriarch's language, they exclaim, 'No doubt we are the people, and wisdom was born with us.'

This spirit is exhilarating but it is obviously perilous. And even if it were not perilous, it is ill-founded. It is impossible to admire without reservation a spirit which ignores the inherited wisdom of twenty-five centuries, which leaves the refined gold of the ages to gather dust unused while it trades upon its own tiny acquisitions.

And here is the corrective function of literature. For literature is the wisdom of man and the history of man. 'It acquaints the mind,' — I am quoting a man of affairs, the President of the United States, — 'by direct contact, with the forces which really govern and modify the world from generation to generation. There is more of a nation's politics to be got out of its poetry than out of all its systematic writers upon public affairs and constitutions.'

'My notion of the literary student' — I am quoting now Lord Morley, whose democracy, however 'tempered,' is beyond suspicion — 'is one who through books explores the strange voyages of man's moral reason, the impulses of the human heart, the changes and chances that have overtaken human ideals of virtue and happiness, of conduct and manners, and the shifting fortunes of great conceptions of truth and virtue.' 'The strange voyages of man's moral reason'! Could a phrase more happily hit off the curious and endless adventures on which man has embarked, bringing home with him what cargoes of moral, that is, social, political, ethical treasure, or wrecking his craft upon what unseen reefs? And

the record of this is literature. Can it be that such a record has nothing to say to the voyagers who are still setting out on the great adventure? 'Yes,' cries Lord Morley, 'let us read to weigh and to consider. In the times before us that promise or threaten deep political, economical, and social controversy, what we need to do is to induce our people to weigh and consider. We want them to cultivate energy without impatience, activity without restlessness, inflexibility without ill-humor.' Impatience, restlessness, ill-humor! — to these minor evils democratic societies are peculiarly exposed, and from these literature may help to save us.

It may help to save us, too, from a greater evil than these, a lack of discrimination. The doctrine of political equality is, in practice, a leveling doctrine, and the tendency of democracies, large and small, is to discount great talents and to look askance at any head which raises itself too high above the welter. This is natural. This is the lesson that tyrants and demagogues have taught democracy. Now, literature does it a great service by reminding it of the fact of inequality. Genius — what is that? It is the incalculable, the arbitrary, the distinguished. It is the very type and symbol of special privilege. Inequality, literature tells us, is the law of life. It is very well to proclaim political equality. It is well to assume social equality. But such proclamations and assumptions are perilous. They may lead us to assume that men are really equal. Practically they have led us to assume just that. 'Democracy,' wrote William James some years ago, 'is on its trial and no one knows how it will stand the ordeal. What its critics now affirm is that its preferences are inveterately for the inferior. Vulgarly enthroned and institutionalized, elbowing everything superior from the highway, this, they tell

us, is our irremediable destiny.' And he proceeds to affirm, in words which cannot be too often read, that the great end of education is to learn to recognize distinction, to acquire a feeling, as he puts it, for 'a good human job' — and this, in order that the majorities who make up our democracy may know from whom to 'take their cue.'

There is no doubt that our educational systems in the past have had too much in view the exceptional man. That is one of the reasons why education, like everything else, is becoming democratized. But it would not be dif-

ficult to prove that there is grave danger that education may aim too low. Literature, I repeat, the study of it, the due appreciation of it, may help to save us from this peril. It will teach us to admire the admirable, it will save us from an indiscriminate leveling, it will preserve for us the image of a true aristocracy, which, if it can no longer mould our institutions, can at least give them moderation, wisdom, and, it may be, permanence. In some such sense as this, poetry may indeed be what Matthew Arnold called it, — 'a criticism of life.'

## URBAN COLLOQUY

BY JOSEPH WARREN BEACH

At midnight, turning sharply round a corner,  
I met a vision: high in the air there hung,  
Between the looming banks of the narrow street,  
Two shining faces, whose exalted orbs  
Seemed to dispute the regency of heaven.  
One was the moon's and one the old clock-tower's.  
The clock's face looked the ruddier and the rounder.  
And yet I seemed to hear the pale moon mutter:  
'It was not always thus. 'Tis scarce ten decades  
Since I, that looked on swarming Nineveh,  
Peered down the long stems of the Norway pine  
Where now this rival flouts me; and for mortals,  
These shores were peopled with gray wolves and gophers.'  
And if the clock replied, 'Mile upon mile  
No sign of aught but human habitation,'  
The surly moon made answer, 'Ay, but wait!'

## UNION PORTRAITS

### VII. SAMUEL BOWLES

BY GAMALIEL BRADFORD

I

It seems highly suitable to conclude a series of Union Portraits with a study of one of the great journalists who played so important a part during the war and the years preceding and following. Several of these men have wider reputations than Samuel Bowles, but perhaps hardly any was more singly and intensely identified with his work. Weed and Greeley had an active personal interest in politics. Dana was a valuable public servant as well as an editor. Garrison was something far different from a mere newspaper man. Bennett was confessedly a money-maker. Raymond was, indeed, a thorough journalist; and Godkin also, one of the highest type; but Godkin was, after all, not born an American, though perhaps of more use to us on that account. Then, I confess that what draws me chiefly to Bowles is that no other journalist — and few other men of his time — has left us so complete, vivid, and passionately human a record of himself.

He was a journalist who grew as his paper grew. He had little more education than that of simple New England home life. In 1844, at eighteen years of age, a country boy, he took hold of his father's weekly country paper, the *Springfield Republican*, and before he died, he made it one of the most intelligent and valuable dailies in the United States, 'the most comprehensive pa-

per,' declared the *Nation*, at the time of his death, 'we believe it is no exaggeration to say, in the country.' And a good authority asserted that 'No American journal during the last ten or twenty years has been more diligently studied by editors.'

There was always, to be sure, about the paper, as about its editor, a certain spice of provincialism, or, as he would have put it, localism. But those who know the old-fashioned New England country towns will admit that their atmosphere may be far broader and less fundamentally provincial than that of larger centres. There was fifty years ago — perhaps there is to-day — some truth in this provincial editor's jibe at the metropolis of his state: 'Always except Boston, of course, which has no more conception of what is going on in the world than the South Sea Islanders themselves.'

Bowles's whole life, outside of his family affections, was in his paper, and he saw the world and mankind through his paper's eyes. Every department was always under his immediate supervision, and he interested himself as much in the advertising and business management as in the editorials.

When he began work, modern possibilities of news were just developing, and he seized upon them eagerly. In the early days he himself reported, with keen observation and that journalistic sense of what counts which is more

than observation; and he was always on the lookout for capable reporters. 'News,' he said, 'is the distinctive object of the *Republican*, to which all other things must bend.' Some thought he was not over-particular about the news he printed or the means of obtaining it. Even his ardent biographer, Merriam, admits that he sometimes appeared to cater to an unhealthy curiosity; and the ill-natured review of Merriam in the *Nation*, said to be by W. P. Garrison, calls Bowles 'a great gossip and by no means a safe confidant.' Yet he would certainly not have subscribed without reserve to the rather generous principle of Dana: 'I have always felt that whatever the Divine Providence permitted to occur I was not too proud to report,' — just as Dana himself might have shrunk from some later developments of his own doctrine, though indeed the chief error of these is apt to consist in reporting what even the Divine Providence did not permit to occur.

But, however vast his appetite for news, Bowles would have been the first to recognize that the newspaper had another function besides mere reporting, — that of commenting on news and shaping public opinion in regard to it. How important this function is can best be realized by reflecting that it did not exist at all a hundred years ago, and that even now it hardly exists elsewhere as it does in America. Up to the nineteenth century the pulpit did what the newspaper now does. The minister had the leading, because he had the reading, of the community. He commented on the world's doings in the light of the moral law, and men went away and saw God's finger in everything. Just how far the daily and Sunday papers have undermined the influence of the pulpit, who shall say? They have certainly taken the place of it, with some gain in universal informa-

tion, but with enormous moral loss. 'This country is not priest-ridden, but press-ridden,' said Longfellow shrewdly. With the best will in the world — and I believe such will is seldom altogether wanting — the editor has many matters to consider besides moral elevation; and even if he wishes to furnish such a thing, he is not always competent to do so. When we read the words of Bowles, 'The church organization seems to me a failure — at least that we have outgrown it, or are fast outgrowing it,' and think, as he no doubt thought, of the newspaper as supplying the church's place, we should remember the weighty remark of Godkin in regard to the defects and dangers of journalism, — 'defects and dangers which nearly every one sees but editors, and which it would be well if editors saw oftener — the recklessness, haste, indifference to finish and accuracy and abstract justice which it is apt to beget in the minds of those who pursue it, and especially of those who pursue it eagerly.'

No one would have recognized these defects in general more heartily than Bowles. But no one was more earnest in insisting upon the power of the press as guide and leader. A *Republican* editorial, written during the war, which we may assume to be his, proclaims, 'With all its failings, with all its prostitutions, the press is the great reliance and safeguard in a time like this, and with a government like ours. And we believe it mainly appreciates its opportunities and responsibilities and is earnest to fulfill them.' He, at any rate, was earnest, and he did his very best to make a paper that should bring him an honest livelihood and should at the same time be a great and inspiring influence in public affairs, should consider the public good only, should be conservative with the radicals and progressive with the conservatives, should

regard principles and not parties, measures and not men, and should follow truth without the slightest care for a merely formal consistency.

This is a high ideal for a newspaper or anything else in this imperfect world; and it is needless to say that the *Republican*, having an editor who was thoroughly human, did not always live up to it. It is a fine thing to avoid extremes, but in doing so you are sure to become obnoxious to all extremists. Hence the *Republican*, in its thirty years' development during Bowles's life, got plenty of shrewd knocks from all parties in succession. It is a fine thing to be independent. Unfortunately complete independence is impossible. There are so many cross twists and conflicting considerations to be taken into account, that at times independence may be taken for discretion; and Garrison could even go so far as to say of his able competitor that as a politician 'he was essentially timid and time-serving.' Again, it is a fine thing to scorn consistency. Emerson did, and why should not Sam Bowles? 'It is no trouble at all to me,' he says, 'that the paper contradicts itself. My business is to tell what seems to me the truth and the news to-day. It's a daily journal. I am not to live to be as old as Methuselah, and brood in silence over a thing till, just before I die, I think I have it right.' The excuse is fascinating certainly, but the practice is likely to have its difficulties.

These difficulties showed in nothing more than in the *Republican's* — and its editor's — delusions as to men. One hero after another — Banks, Dawes, Colfax, Greeley, not to mention others — was set up and urged upon the public, till Time stowed them all neatly away in that vast wallet which contains his tribute to oblivion. Andrew, wrote Bowles, in 1861, 'is conceited, dogmatic, and lacks breadth and tact

for government'; Lincoln 'is a "simple Susan."' These are things that a man — or a newspaper — would rather not have said.

## II

But such criticisms do not alter the fact that during all those trying, bitter, passionate years the *Republican* stood earnestly for the best, the highest things, and was in every way and at every point alive. If it was so, it was because Samuel Bowles was as thoroughly alive as any man who ever put pen to paper to describe the doings and sufferings of this intricate world. He had his faults and weaknesses; but sloth and inertia and indifference were not among them.

All his life, the man's whole soul, are reflected in the letters contained in his biography, which are much more significant than his formal books of travel, or even his editorials. It is a great pity that his correspondence has not been collected and published separately, for in my judgment no more telling, varied, human letters have been written upon this side of the Atlantic.

Dead letters do not mean dead souls. There are souls touched with the keenest intensity of living that either cannot or will not reveal themselves in correspondence with even their most intimate friends. Take as an instance the letters of Matthew Arnold. Here assuredly was a man of the widest thought and the subtlest spiritual experience. Yet he writes almost wholly of practical affairs, in a dull conventional strain, which has no claims to attention except those of undeniable simplicity and sincerity. But letters alive as those of Bowles must certainly indicate a burning heart behind them. Take the verve of a scrap from one of the earlier. 'Croak, croak, croak! Why the devil can't Berkshire do something

besides? Let those who are right go to work.' Nor is it in any way a matter of mere slang or expletives. These fly freely when they add force or color, but there is plenty of force and color without them. There is grace and sparkle in the adjectives; there is delicate suggestion in the sweep of the phrases; there is, above all, the cunning, instinctive use of rhythm to charm, to spur, to stimulate, which is perhaps the most effective instrument of the great prose writer. 'I should chiefly regret Aiken of this lot. I have imbibed a good deal of respect for that man. Ben Butler says he is an exaggeration of the stage Yankee; but he is fresh and hearty, and keen and human, and says civil things about me — and of course I like him.' When letters run on like that, through two stout volumes, we are bound to learn something of the man that writes them.

First, he was a man of the deepest, tenderest affection and devotion. He married very young a girl who was very young, and their attachment through early years of struggle and later years of illness is charming to study and appreciate. They had ten children, which naturally means care, especially for a worker of limited means and nervous temperament. The difference of sex gleams vividly in the father's casual remark concerning the death of one of these children at birth: 'She [Mrs. Bowles] feels her loss terribly. Though a disappointment, it is a small matter to me, only as it affects her.'

Yet the most watchful care and solicitude for both mother and children are everywhere apparent, a care that was duly and lovingly returned. The husband's full appreciation of all he received shows in this passage, referring to a journey proposed for his benefit: 'Of course Mrs. Bowles is always ready to say go; you know she would give up any gratification, or endure any suffer-

ing, to give me a pleasure, or get me out of the way of a half-day of work. But that does n't make it always right that I should take her at her word — by no means.' While his constant anxiety for the welfare of the woman he adored appears characteristically and delightfully in a letter laying down a minute programme of what she should do for her health every hour in the day: the meals, the air, the exercise, the society. 'Have somebody come to see you every day. Read newspapers more. Read light books more. Study things that make for fun and peace.' And we know, and he knew, that nobody ever obeys such injunctions. But to give them eases the tired heart of love in solitude. As for his children, his care of them was guided by this exquisite precept, which would save a world of woe if it were written on every parent's heart: 'It is not much that I can do for my children, but I never want to lose sight of myself at their ages — then the little I do can be done more intelligently.'

Nor was his family affection all care and solicitude. As to his children, listen to this pretty rapture on one of the ten in infancy: 'He is practicing on *Yes* and *Mamma*; but all his efforts at the latter melt sweetly into *Papa* — so ravishingly.' And the following delicate discrimination proves the thoughtful study of enduring tenderness: 'We are all pretty well; Ruth is a breeze from the northwest, and Dwight from the south, all the while; Bessie is dainty and shy and quiet and strange, and Charlie enterprising beyond his power.'

As for the depth of conjugal devotion, it is shown so profoundly and so searchingly all through the book, that passages are difficult to choose. I select one not addressed to Mrs. Bowles, that, underneath its general analysis of emotion, implies personal experience of the deepest and most intimate charac-



ter. 'You must give if you expect to receive — give happiness, friendship, love, joy, and you will find them floating back to you. Sometimes you will give more than you receive. We all do that in some of our relations, but it is as true a pleasure often to give without return as life can afford us. We must not make bargains with the heart, as we would with the butcher for his meat. Our business is to give what we have to give — what we can get to give. The return we have nothing to do with. It will all come in due time — in this world or another.'

As these words indicate, Bowles's sympathy and tenderness extended far beyond the family circle. Indeed they were as wide as the world. He has observation just as subtle and delicate on unselfishness and sacrifice as on positive affection. 'We, fortunately, know our failures, and, alas, how well we know them. And yet, out of our very selfishness, out of our very neglect, God buildeth us up; so that what we do perform for kindred and friends takes on larger power and gives deeper bliss than if in a narrow way we had given more hours and thought and service to the beloved. It is a shadowy, tender line between service to ourselves and service to others.'

It is true that this is a newspaper man, who looked at life from the journalistic angle, which is not always strictly humanitarian. To be sure, even as an editor his keen, delightful sympathies often warm his impersonal comment, as when he writes of a deceased celebrity, 'Years and invalid experience have unlocked for us some of the mysteries of his life; we know him better lately without seeing him at all.' But it is also said that his zeal for news sometimes led to disastrous revelations, as when he stopped prize-fighting in Springfield by printing the names of respected citizens who had patronized it;

while in other cases his methods were less justified by results.

In private life Bowles's kindness was by no means confined to theory or sentiment. There is clear record of many deeds of broad generosity and covert indication of many more. Perhaps the most touching is recorded in the last words written by him to his wife, before sailing for Europe in search of health, when money was none too abundant and other prospects were dreary enough: '— has just come to say good-bye. He will write you. He accepts our offer. I am very glad of it. Now send him and — the money regularly, and tell nobody.'

There are little kindnesses, little matters of thoughtfulness, which often mean more than money, and certainly endear more. In these Bowles was admirably proficient, because he had the instinct for them. And there is no occasion when such kindnesses are more needed, more appreciated, and more difficult than during travel. General Walker, an admirable judge, who was with Bowles for some months in England, testifies to his exceptional qualities in this direction. He was always thoughtful of others, enjoyed every minute of their pleasures, and was much more anxious to discover what his young companions wished to see, than to see anything himself.

In short, he was an eminently social being. This is evident from the first page of his biography to the last. It is true that he had his times of reserve and repression, times when he did not seem to welcome even friends. Such times must come to every man who lives a busy, eager, crowded inner life. 'Why,' he said to one of his acquaintances, 'why don't people clap me on the shoulder, with a "How are you, old fellow?" as they do you?' 'Because,' was the answer, 'you go along with a look that says, "Keep away from me,

d—n you!”’ But the very pathos of the query shows a longing for human contact and fellowship and intimacy, and this pathetic longing is especially apparent in Bowles’s exclamations of solitude and loneliness when he is traveling and among strangers. Busy as his thoughts were, they did not give him sufficient companionship. If he had a delightful experience, he wanted a friend to share it. If he had a bitter experience, he wanted a friend to take away the sting.

This intense human interest undoubtedly served him well in the business of his life. Nobody profits more by human contact than the journalist. To Bowles the wide world was, in a sense, fodder for his paper. He talked with men of all types and occupations, gathered ideas from the professor and the mechanic, from the farmer and the lawyer, from the fine lady and the ditch-digger in the street. He carried to perfection the delicate art of listening, and knew how to make his own speech serve to elicit the speech and the inmost thought of others.

At the same time, in doing this he was no hypocrite, did not seek men’s company with any cold design of betraying their confidence, did not scoff at or deride them. If he mingled freely and widely with his fellows, it was first of all because he loved to do so, loved the touch of the human hand and the sound of the human voice. It was this spontaneous and constant humanity which made his presence so widely sought in all societies. Senator Dawes wrote, after Bowles’s death, ‘I never knew a man who knew him who would n’t rather have him at his table than any other man in the world.’

Even in illness and decay, when most of us prefer to brood alone over disappointment and failure, this same charming social instinct found utterance in one of those delightful passages which

are in themselves complete lyric poems. ‘I was sure you would have a pleasant summer with the Haskells. They are dreadful good fellows, both of them. But I could n’t have kept up with your gait. I am the chap for “the bank where the wild thyme grows,” with one other fellow, male or female, lying in the sunshine, picking flowers to pieces, and discoursing on the frivolity of things we cannot do.’

The distinction, or indistinction, of sex in this passage is characteristic; for among Bowles’s multitude of friends there were many women. His relations with them seem to have been wholly intellectual, and I see no reason to suppose that Mrs. Bowles had ever any cause for jealousy. But his quick, light, active spirit naturally responded to a woman’s gayety and sensitiveness, and he sought them, wanted them, missed them. At Baden-Baden he writes, ‘There are no women to chaff with, and to rub your mind out of its morbidity.’ None of his letters are more varied, more charming, more full of fresh and vivid interest than those he writes to Miss Whitney. At one moment he laughs with her over some trifle, some new fashion or folly, at the next he is discussing the future of democracy or the welfare of his soul.

It appears that with women he was always perfectly easy and natural; that he did not stand in awe of them or regard them as in any way different. Says one lady of his visits, ‘He used to come in for a few moments, on his way back and forth between his home and his office, and would perhaps sit with both legs hanging over the arm of a chair, his hat low down over his eyes, and talk *sarse*, as he called it.’ Also, he did not abstain from that affectionate criticism which one sex always feels privileged to bestow upon the other. ‘Women are fascinating creatures; yet it is treading upon eggs all the time to

deal with them.' And again, in his extraordinarily careless, vivid fashion, 'Traveling with women sops up one's time awfully.'

But we have the testimony of the most intelligent men and women both, that this ease and occasional apparent flippancy did not spring from indifference or contempt. 'I hardly ever saw any one give just the sort of recognition to a woman that he did,' says one male friend, 'treating her as an intellectual equal, yet with a kind of chivalrous deference, suggested rather than expressed.' And a woman has rarely paid finer tribute to a man than has Miss Brackett to him: 'Of all the men I have ever known, he was the only one who never made a woman feel as if he were condescending in thought or word when he talked to her.'

### III

I have not meant to emphasize Bowles's social qualities at the expense of his intellectual, for it is the latter that make him most interesting now and that account for most of his achievement, though here also the social did its part. He was not a profound or elaborate thinker on abstract questions, did not pretend to be. In all matters of practical morals and the conduct of life he had very energetic and decided opinions and proclaimed them in his letters and in his paper, perhaps not always logically or consistently, but always with a manifest intention of promoting the good in the world. He liked to preach and believed that he did it better than a good many parsons, in which he was certainly right. 'Nor do I see any other line of influence or noble effort in this world except in behalf of ideals.' What could be more touching or more significant of a life passed with high aims than his last words to Dawes, 'Drop on your knees,

Dawes, and thank God that you have done a little good in the world, and ask his forgiveness that you have done no more.'

Also, as time served, he liked to wrestle with great spiritual problems. 'Without philosophy,' he wrote, 'there is vastly little of life but a passion and a struggle.' The long letter written to Miss Whitney in January, 1862, is an intensely curious analysis of religious and speculative theories, the earnest effort of a mind not schooled by abstract thought to disentangle the complex web of human longing and passion and despair. Of almost equal interest is the letter to Mrs. Bowles expressing a humble desire to conform to her religious observances, even when he could not himself wholly enter into them.

Yet the attitude generally is one of groping, not a sad or morbid groping, but a willingness to leave to God the things that are God's, while working day and night at the task which God has set us to be done in this world. The whole nature of the man leaps out in one of those splendid phrases that he had the secret of coining: 'It is comforting to *people with free and vagrant heads* to feel that there is a Christianity back of and without Christ, and to which he seems rather interpreter and disciple than founder.' (The italics are mine.)

A free and vagrant head! That is what gives Bowles much of his charm, and he himself prized that freedom far above what any conventional education could have afforded him. For he had no academic discipline, and very little of school; he got what learning he possessed from the touch of human heads and hearts and the careful contemplation of his own. 'His lack of early training was never compensated by self-culture or wise reflection,' says Garrison, scornfully. This is far too severe. At the same time, it is curious

to consider that a man who was all his life a guide to the public through written words should have been so little conversant with the written words of others. Bowles's reading was mainly newspapers; and newspapers, though good seasoning, are not very substantial diet for the intellect.

Bowles himself was keenly aware of his deficiencies. Indeed, as regards style and literary quality, he was far too humble. 'The book made itself,' he says of one of his volumes of travel; 'it is a newspaper book; I am a newspaper writer, and not a book writer; and I do not aspire to be other than I am.' Again: 'I was afraid you would think it [an editorial] a little overwrought, and not low-toned enough for the subject. That is where I always err in my work; it gives it something of its power and charm with the mass of readers; it loses for it something of the impression on the select and superior few.' And as he criticized his own writing, so he often lamented his lack of leisurely reading, of wide contact with the best thought and experience of humanity. When he traveled in Europe, art meant little to him, historical association meant little to him. He sighs for time and strength to think, to adjust himself to the larger current of the world, to get out of the mad, exhausting whirl of news, mere news, which makes the passing passions of the hour seem out of all proportion to the permanent interests of life. Yet even in these longings, books, the distillation of human activity, do not take first place. 'I would roam about the world, studying books some, nature a good deal, and people and institutions more.'

For the man was above all a worker and liver. It was just the 'free and vagrant head' that made his life so joyously abundant and his paper so forcible. His intelligence may not have been profound, but it was splendid in

its vigor, its energy, its variety, its speed. How direct and frank it was, profiting by its very self-training to brush away old convention and the dry bones of formal futility! Has he to congratulate a friend on a congressional victory? 'It is not statesmanship, and you know it. But it is all of statesmanship, I frankly admit, that the present Congress is up to.' Do fools torment him with old saws about dead reputations? 'I hate the "*Nil de mortuis*," etc. What do men die for, except that posterity may impartially judge, and get the full benefit of their example?'

So in his business. He wanted no shirkers, no drivellers, no fuss, no make-believe. He exacted work — faithful, earnest, driving work. He was in a sense a severe task-master, having sharp reproof at his command, when necessary, — not in stormy verbosity, but in just the word or two that find a joint and put a barb in it. He insisted upon exactness, nicety, finish, and set a high standard of mechanical production in days when there were fewer facilities than at present.

But he knew how to make work easy, so far as it ever can be. His office was systematized. Each man had his task, was taught how and when to do it and by whom it was to be controlled and criticized when done. And if the chief could reprove, he could also encourage. Sharp words were lightened by a touch of the quick, sympathetic humor that was natural to him. Words of praise were rare, but they meant something when they came, and power of achievement in any special line was quickly discerned and energetically supported.

Moreover, work was urged on by the most powerful stimulus of all, example. This was no man to set wheels a-going and then watch them whirl at his leisure. From his journeyman days to the

last minute when work was possible, and longer, he labored with all that was in him. 'What with forty-two hours' continuous work Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, without sleep, and getting over it, I had not time to write to you,' is one of his casual, significant comments. Work was his life, writes one who knew him intimately. We have seen the depth of his domestic affection. Yet in a sense it would be just to say that for thirty years the *Springfield Republican* was wife and child and food and sleep to him. It certainly robbed him of any complete enjoyment of all these things, though it also made his enjoyment of them keener. Even his recreation had usually storm and fury in it. He liked a horse, but he cared nothing for looks or pedigree. What he wanted was speed. An acquaintance, who had studied this phase, said of him, 'He was fonder of reckless driving than any man I ever knew.' Then, though rarely, he would relax and drop into absolute quiescence. As he lay one afternoon on the piazza, with the apple-blossoms blowing over him, he murmured, 'This, I guess, is as near heaven as we shall ever get in this life.'

For, as you see, he was a mere bundle of nerves, the quintessence of our sun- and wind-driven New England temperament, whose life is work, whose death is work, whose heaven is work, whatsoever other heaven we may dream of. You can read it written on his spare, energetic figure, on his sensitive, strained, wistful forehead; above all, in his intense and eager eyes. It was the quick, responsive nerves that enabled him to do the work he did, that gave him passionate joys and passionate sorrows. Even when the nerves are disordered and tormenting, he recognizes their value with wonderfully subtle analysis. 'There is a certain illumination with the disorder that is

enchanting at times.' He is determined that they shall be his servants, not his masters. Now he lays whip and spur to them, forces them to do and overdo, till a set task is accomplished. Again he restrains them, lives by rule and system, makes schedules of food, schedules of hours. These exuberant sensibilities are splendid things, so you control them. 'Sympathies and passions are greater elements of power than he admits. All they want is to have judgment equal to and directing them. No matter how powerful, how acute they are—the more so the better. But sympathies and passions that run away with us are oftener a curse than a blessing.' He thinks he has controlled them, declares he has. 'You must remember I have necessarily schooled myself to coolness and philosophy, and to the look ahead. Otherwise my life would have killed me years ago.'

But such control, especially when carried beyond the normal, is a wearing, exhausting process, and is sure in the end to bring a penalty. Bowles, with his 'look ahead,' knew this perfectly well and faced it always. When a friend warned him of what was inevitably coming, he answered with these striking words: 'I know it just as well as you do. When my friends point out that I am working toward a breakdown, they seem to think that is to influence my action. Not at all! I have got the lines drawn, the current flowing, and by throwing my weight here now, I can count for something. If I make a long break or parenthesis, to get strong, I shall lose my chance. No man is living a life that is worth living, unless he is willing to die for somebody or something, — at least to die a little!'

Admirable words, and perhaps wise, though not for all, nor at all times. Dying a little is not always conveniently managed at discretion, nor even dying a great deal. And Bowles's disregard

and positive abuse of his nerves not only killed him at fifty-two, but caused him and all who loved him infinite distress and misery before that time. He perfectly understood the cause of his troubles. 'My will has carried me for years beyond my mental and physical power; that has been the offending rock.' Again, 'Nobody knows how I have abused my brain but myself, and I therefore ought to be the most patient with its maladies.'

But to know the cause and to find the cure are far, far different. Therefore, from a very early stage, his life was made up alternately of extravagant effort at home to do more than he or any one man could do, and then of forced change and travel to procure that renovation which could come only — or at any rate could come far better — from within by the acquired habit of repose.

Repose, peace, and the tranquil sleep that should go with them — these were the remedies, the blessings that Bowles sought far and wide, up and down, for thirty years. He told Mr. Howells in Venice that he was sleeping only one hour out of the twenty-four. Sometimes he slept more than that, but he never slept enough. Modern medical methods might have helped him a little. The advice he had was well meant, but now sounds strange. 'Kill a horse, and it will do you good.' He might have killed a dozen horses, but black care would none the less have buzzed and snarled about his ears.

Peace! Peace! Not Clarendon's Falkland could more longingly ingeminate the word. Perhaps Bowles knew so little about it that he overestimated its blessings. 'I never saw in his face,' said a friend, 'the expression of repose — the look was always of fire or tire.' But even Clarendon wrote few things more striking than this paragraph on peace in heaven, though the quality is

not Clarendon's. 'I wonder whether we shall have such weather in heaven! whether or no we go — whether or no such weather. But if the world lives much longer it will have abolished all these whims of its youth. The Unitarians came, and abolished hell; Parker came, Higginson stays, to abolish Christ; the next conceited set of upstarts to invent a new elixir of life, out of gin and juniper berries, will probably supersede heaven, or bring it down to earth. But that is what the rest of us dream of doing — but it can't be done so long as nerves thrill and stomachs labor. No elixir of love, or gin, can make heaven, with neuralgia playing on the fiddles of the orchestra, and dyspepsia groaning through the grim trombone. Give it up. I think I will stick to the original heaven as a thing more sure.'

Nerves so thoroughly and constantly jangled could not fail to produce some unfortunate results in practical life. However perfect the control, there was irritability that would break out at times. Bowles often refers to being thoroughly cross and out of sorts, sometimes in a mood of discouragement, sometimes with his whimsical grace and fancy. Others refer to it also. In his home, with those he cherished, breaks of temper seem to have been rare; but in his office, though he was much admired and much beloved, he was regarded with a good deal of awe.

And the jangled nerves brought hours of depression and temporary hopelessness. He sometimes refers to these, expressing them with his really wonderful gift of telling phraseology. 'I did not mount my great heights of *abandon*; perhaps it is better described in your own sad words as a "*wise despair*."' Take, again, this passage of extraordinary self-analysis, written to Mrs. Bowles, and doubly striking from a man so schooled by persistent disci-



pline to courage and hope. 'Mary, don't let my fretful, downcast moods annoy you. They are unworthy of me and I ought to rise above them, and control them. But sometimes they master and overpower me. I want to give it all up sometimes. Nobody can understand the spell that is upon me. It cannot be described — it does n't seem as if anybody else can ever feel it. Consider me if you can as a little child, sick and peevish, wanting love and indulgence and petting and rest and peace. There, this ought not to have been written. But it can't be unwritten, and it is too late to write anything else. It is morbid; but there's truth, sometimes the clearest, in our morbid reflections. Health is too often independence, selfish philosophy, and indifference.'

Also, worn nerves bring not only general depression and discouragement, but a bitter sense of tasks unaccomplished and vast hopes unrealized. This impression of failure or of uncompleted effort was most keenly felt by Bowles. He was a man with more than the common human passion for success. He could not bear to have other men defeat him. He could not bear to have chance or cross-accident defeat him. To have his own nerves defeat him was humiliation hardly to be described. He loved power, he loved domination, he loved mastery. No one appreciated more broadly than he the immense power that is given to the modern newspaper, and it was for this reason, more than for any other, that he loved newspaper work. In his own office he was absolute master; not a tyrant certainly, but in a quiet, determined, final fashion the one sole authority on little and great affairs.

In this love of power lay unquestionably Bowles's weakness. The most marked failure of his life was his attempt to transfer his activity from the *Republican* to the *Boston Traveler*, in

1857. Various explanations were sought for this. Various elements no doubt entered into it. But a considerable element was the man's own autocratic and imperious disposition. Garrison's theory that he undertook the task 'with a humptiousness that at once made him the laughing-stock of his esteemed contemporaries' is much too harsh, but it suggests substantial truth, nevertheless.

So, in the conduct of his own paper, he was too inclined to assert his personal views and feelings, for the pure pleasure of it. Independence in politics and religion is a difficult and dangerous path to follow, and an editor in absolute control is apt to mistake whim for pure reason and the rejection of others' judgment for the assertion of his own. If I quote Garrison's *Nation* review yet again, it is because there is a certain malicious pleasure in watching the editors of these two great journals, whose work was in some ways similar, criticize each other as they criticized all the rest of the world. Garrison, then, says, 'The sort of independence which Mr. Bowles gradually achieved consisted in making a fetich of his journal'; and he again characterizes Bowles's effort as 'the evasion of personal responsibility under the guise of a highly virtuous independence.' When the critic of the *Nation* penned this and the other amenities I have before cited, he had just had before his eyes the following from one of Bowles's letters: 'The *Nation* has become a permanent and proud addition to American journalism. Often conceited and priggish; coldly critical to a degree sometimes amusing, and often provoking; and singularly lacking, not only in a generous enthusiasm of its own but in any sympathy with that great American quality, by which alone we as a people are led on to our efforts and our triumphs in the whole arena of progress; the paper yet shows such vigor

and integrity of thought, such moral independence of party, such elevation of tone, and such wide culture, as to demand our great respect and secure our hearty praise.'

But if Bowles's criticism had some justice in it, so also had Garrison's. Bowles's own biographer admits that he was too ready to sacrifice friendship to what he considered duty, and that he freely found fault in his paper with those whom he loved and by whom he wished to be loved in private life. And have we not Bowles's own personal testimony on the subject, none the less forcible for being half jocose? 'I mean to be as loyal as possible, and that is n't very loyal, for you know I do love to find fault and grumble, and thank God I can afford to.' But who of us can really afford to grumble and find fault?

Yet what finer witness can there be to character than the great love that surrounded this man, in spite of his fault-finding? Those whom he attacked publicly resented it for a while, but once they met him they forgot it. He had the art of making men forget everything except his charm. All his life he fought Ben Butler. Yet whenever they met, they swapped jokes and stories. When Bowles was on his deathbed, he received from Butler a letter of sympathy and good wishes, and almost his last words were, 'Write to thank General Butler, and say that while Mr. Bowles has always differed from him in politics, he has never failed to recognize his high qualities, and to appre-

ciate his many personal attractions.' Senator Dawes suffered repeatedly from the strictures of the *Republican*; yet he declared that he loved its editor more than any one outside of his own family. A member of the editorial staff, who had been a witness of many sharp rebuffs, confesses, 'I almost worshiped him. There was more religion in my feeling toward him than in almost anything else in me.' But most touching of all is the exclamation commonly heard among his humble neighbors in the city of Springfield, 'I am so sorry Sam Bowles is going to die.'

He was a striking and most sympathetic type of the journalist, and the journalist is interesting because he came into the world only a hundred years ago and seems likely to play an increasingly great part in it. Certainly no one who has followed our own Civil War in the newspapers can fail to feel the singular and important position they then occupied. If the war itself is to be regarded as a great tragic drama, the newspapers almost precisely perform the function of the Greek tragic chorus. They comment abstractly, yet with trembling eagerness, upon the conduct and motives of the actors; they intervene often indiscreetly and with doubly tragic consequence; they prophesy with pathetic or ludicrous incapacity of vision; above all they reflect from moment to moment, like a sensitized surface, the long, unwieldy, enormous ebb and flow of events and passions and desires of which no man can really divine the end.

## RECENT REFLECTIONS OF A NOVEL-READER

WHEN that glib proverb, 'God made the country, but man made the town,' was first put into words, towns were far less menacing and imposing than they are to-day. One could live in town and still get a sufficient, though diminished, share of blue sky and oxygen. The proverb was a prophecy rather than an affirmation. We are living in the day of its fulfillment.

That modern cities have solved vast problems of sanitation, water-supply, lighting, transportation, housing, education, with skill and with something like adequacy, cannot be imputed unto them for righteousness until they have also solved the subtler, more fundamental problems of vitality and character with which they are now struggling. They still take the strong, placid, deep-breathing, clear-eyed country boy, and turn him and his children into restless, excitable, shallow-lunged folk who have given up their peace and their vitality for increased nervous activity, and have exchanged their intuition of the divine for a profound spiritual indifference.

The rush of population to those hard-and-fast, stifling spots that are now our cities plays a large part in producing a new type of character, a new philosophy. Other elements enter into it, of course. The most conspicuous of these, perhaps, is a negative thing — the lack of a vital religion. How far the spiritual life is actively discouraged by urban conditions is too complicated a problem for offhand solution. But we may not ignore the age-long testimony of the saints and sages that one must go apart from men to find God.

Current fiction offers its own reflection of these new types of character,

this new philosophy, and it also reflects a wholesome reaction against them. The reaction is usually more or less conscious and intended, while the dessicating modern tendency itself is more frequently exhibited with great *naïveté* in the author's own attitude toward life.

The case for the country requires no proving to those of us past forty. When industry engaged fewer folk, and agriculture proportionately more, there was something in the world which is being lost out of it. To say that agriculture tends to make men, and industries tend to make animals, has a shocking sound. No doubt it is a statement quite open to attack, yet it looks toward truth.

If we say, instead, that work chiefly in the open air, close to the soil, and the association of men in small and not too homogeneous groups are the only conditions under which large numbers of human beings fit to possess and improve the earth can be bred and reared continuously over long periods of time, we shall come close to a statement impossible to deny. Undeniably, also, life under the latter conditions is more valuable to the individual as well as more hopeful for the race. Possessing, as it does, all the elements that give interest and develop personality, it is eternally worth while.

Now and again we find a work of fiction which is consciously explicit as to the country's case. Whenever such a book is thus definite, and adds grace to its conviction, the present reviewer is glad to give audible thanks for that book. *Hillsboro People*,<sup>1</sup> by Dorothy

<sup>1</sup> *Hillsboro People*. By DOROTHY CANFIELD. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

Canfield, is such an one. Read it! Especially read that gripping of reality, *Petunias — That's for Remembrance*, and learn from it how dark realities have been well met!

Miss Canfield's tales of the Vermont country justify themselves first of all by being good stories; but they have body, unity, efficiency given them by the author's preliminary declaration of faith in country living. She quotes in well-justified derision the statement (from Pritchell's *Hand-book of Economics*) that the rush of population to the great cities is no temporary movement. 'It is roused by a final revolt against that malignant relic of the dark ages, the country village, and by a healthy craving for the deep, full life of the metropolis, for contact with the vitalizing stream of humanity.' It is doubtless well that city-dwellers should feel thus — if they can; but such statements should have small place in handbooks of economics until the professors of that inexact science have disproved what physicians have long told us, — that no family can endure steady contact with 'the vitalizing stream of humanity' for three successive generations, so hard is it on blood and brawn and brain alike.

'People thrive in country villages,' says Miss Canfield, 'because they crave human life. . . . In the phantasmagoric pantomime of the city we forget that there are so many real people in all the world, so diverse, so unfathomably human, as those who meet us in the little post-office on the night of our return to Hillsboro.' City folks cannot 'feel themselves live,' she tells us. Ceaseless activity protects them from the undesired consciousness that they are themselves. 'They cannot conceive the bitter-sweet, vital taste of that consciousness as we villagers have it; they cannot understand how arid their existence seems to us without this unhurried,

penetrating realization of their own existence and of the meaning of their acts. We do not blame city-dwellers for not having it; we ourselves lose it when we venture into their maelstrom . . . but we do not stay where we cannot feel ourselves live. We hurry back to the shadow of Hemlock Mountain, feeling that to love life one does not need to be what is usually called happy, one needs only to live.' — Here is an adequate philosophy in a nutshell, but it is not always acceptable to the intensely urban modern mind!

In the past, English novelists have acknowledged liberally the debt character owes to the soil. Some of them do so still. For instance, weight is given to the pleasant story-making of Mrs. Skrine, author of *Billie's Mother*,<sup>1</sup> by her avowed intention to celebrate the abiding virtues of English peasant stock. The chief of these she finds to be that mass of personality which we call force of character, showing itself in stability, honesty, justice, and limitless devotion to its own.

Eden Phillpotts has long been concerned with these able-bodied virtues and their counterbalancing defects. Always he adds power and the artist's mastery of subject to his consideration of them. In *Brunel's Tower*,<sup>2</sup> his best book since the incomparable *Widcombe Fair*, he deals as well, in the character of Harvey Porter, with the stimulus of environment and its power to modify natural tendency. The scene of the story is a West Country pottery, and the book is as refreshing to the spirit as a week in Devon. It is large, sane, able, and in spite of tragedy, amusing.

The author of *Mrs. Martin's Man*,<sup>3</sup> St. John G. Ervine, a new British writ-

<sup>1</sup> *Billie's Mother*. By MARY J. H. SKRINE. New York: The Century Co.

<sup>2</sup> *Brunel's Tower*. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. New York: The Macmillan Co.

<sup>3</sup> *Mrs. Martin's Man*. By ST. JOHN G. ERVINE. New York: The Macmillan Co.

er of power and distinction, deals with this weight of personality as shown in Scotch-Irish stock in a North-of-Ireland village. In its simplicity and humanness, this book is almost extravagantly good. Mrs. Martin is one of those slim Irishwomen who hide under a frail exterior the force to accomplish gigantic tasks. Captivated by the boisterous, masterful James Martin, she marries him against the will of her family. At his best James is an indecent brute. When he finally deserts his wife, after an intrigue with her sister under her own roof, the reader is delighted to be rid of him. Mrs. Martin picks up the pieces and makes a life. She establishes a shop, earns money, brings up her children, supervises the erring sister, all with a balance and broad-mindedness that are actually disconcerting! What she suffers she keeps to herself, in the decent, old-fashioned way. Her life is made up of corrupt, unlovely things. She endures them steadfastly, and by grace of her endurance, they lose their hideousness. To walk through slime without disgust, to suffer wrong without anger, is somewhat of a feat, even for North-of-Ireland character. She handles with equal capacity the complications arising from her husband's return as a dirty unattractive prodigal, and from her son's discovery of the father's character. Her head is level, her hand strong. It is not fitting that she should publicly disgrace her Jamesy's father, though to her he can only be 'a man in my house that does things around the shop, that's all.' Neither will she allow her son to show his resentment against his father and his aunt. 'I'd be the poor woman if I was to wander about thinkin' o' my troubles an' my pride, an' how I was hurt by this one an' that one. I'm too ould to be hatin' people, Jamesy, an' when you're my age, son, you 'll not be hatin' people unless your

mind's a rotten mind. Your wee hates 'll drop off you just like an ould shawl that slips from your shoulders when you're not lookin', an' you'll be knowin' well your pleasure is to be goin' about with as good a heart as you can.'

Such big, broad-minded folk as Martha Martin and Phillpotts's George Easterbrook and Paul Pitts are fine representative specimens of what country living, the old religion, and the old philosophy wrought out of the raw stuff of human nature. Over against them in sharp contrast are the neurasthenic, light-weight heroes and heroines who swarm in some of the recent city-made novels, illustrating unintentionally but vividly the deterioration worked by modern life and theory. Some of these novels are English, some American. The neurasthenic, perhaps, belong chiefly to us. When the English get off the track of life, they are maniacal rather than neurasthenic, and apt to run amuck even in their fiction.

*Angela's Business*,<sup>1</sup> perhaps the best of these city-made stories, is a most amusing tale, written with greater dexterity and smoothness than Mr. Harrison has heretofore achieved; but it is a very one-sided presentation of that problem which confronts the young of both sexes — how, namely, to achieve a satisfactory marriage. Angela is a tremendously clinging vine; Mary Wing is a fine, up-standing, over-worked schoolteacher; Donald is a young cousin whom Mary supervises and plans for with sisterly devotion; Charles King Garrott is a nice, but not over-baked, young man who tutors a little and writes a little and tries to get a line on Woman. He admires Angela until he perceives she is out for capture, when he hastily sneaks round the corner, throwing Donald in her way to pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Angela's Business*. By HENRY SYDNOR HARRISON. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co.



tect himself. Mary, meanwhile, is vainly throwing another girl in Donald's way, a 'new' girl with a rich father, who would be such a satisfactory match for Donald! Angela carries off — not the prize exactly, but just Donald. Donald can't be a prize: the term is inapplicable to any man who could live for years under the ægis of a Mary Wing without developing wit enough to avoid an Angela. By this time Charles King Garrott has learned to appreciate Mary Wing, whom he once suspected of being too hard and too busy to love or be loved. Fortunately Mary can earn a living for two, as the reader sees no ground for faith that Charles King will be able to do so. As to earning a living for four —!

The reader asks himself, as he closes the book, why it is any better for a man to be a clinging vine than for a woman? This is not at all the question Mr. Harrison means to raise, but it faces us none the less. Probably the author only intended his hero to seem young and uncertain about life and women, but he actually does seem rather knock-kneed and do-nothing. The stony-hearted reader reflects as follows: Angela is weak and 'feminine'; Mary Wing, strong and womanly; Angela's man has vigor enough to conquer a place in the world; Mary's has n't; the strong, womanly women usually attract the men who need protection; the weak, 'feminine' women mate with able men. This seems to be Nature's little way of keeping the balance. But if we are to pity Donald ensnared by Angela, no less must we pity Mary Wing stooping to Charles King Garrott. His intentions are much better than Angela's, — we cheerfully grant him that, — but he is likely to prove an impediment to Mary, even as Angela to Donald. Mr. Harrison pities Donald tremendously and despises Angela quite viciously. Why, then, does he refuse to pity Mary

Wing and despise Charles King? The astute reader, too old to be caught with chaff, demands even-handed justice here!

If Charles King, girlish, sentimental, enthusiastic, clinging, is the New Man, what shall we call Waldo Strong, the "Reluctant Adam" <sup>1</sup> in whom we have Shaw out-Shawed? Is he the last word of modernity in man? If so — alas for man! His romantic adventures are all due to feminine initiative. From his earliest years, the fair sex frankly hurl themselves at Waldo's head. He repulses them gently but firmly, never condescending to take a kindly interest in any of them, though he marries one and conducts a brief intrigue with another. It is not his passionless estate that worries the reader, but this inability to feel ordinary human liking. His blood-ties bore him. He seems to have no men-friends, no steady playmates; he sees even his business associates through the small end of an opera-glass. All life is as remote to him as sex-emotion is. Only music is intangible enough to interest him. Obviously a character so arid must be well described in order to hold the attention, and *A Reluctant Adam* is written with unusual delicacy, skill, and wit. It is clever, conscientious work. But if Waldo is merely a freak, he is not worth the pains, while if he is the Coming Man, the prospect is too painful to consider.

Turning momentarily from the work of young Americans to that of young Englishmen, we come upon characters and philosophy which are devastating rather than painful. Consider Gilbert Cannan's *Young Earnest*.<sup>2</sup> It is the most flagrant example current fiction has to offer of work which is off the

<sup>1</sup> *A Reluctant Adam*. By SIDNEY WILLIAMS. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co.

<sup>2</sup> *Young Earnest*. By GILBERT CANNAN. New York: D. Appleton & Co.



track of life—that track to which Mrs. Martin, for instance, adheres with such marvelous balance. Mr. Cannan has now written enough to make it clear that anarchy in the individual life is his main subject. And if one may judge from editorial comment in this book, it has become his creed also. This is a surprise, for one had inferred—somewhat too hastily, no doubt—that Mr. Cannan was an artist. ‘Jump the track!’ seems to be his advice to his characters, no matter what track it is, or whether one is the engine pulling the load or only the caboose that will hardly be missed. Under any and all circumstances, follow your will and jump the track! Christian morality has ‘obscured the sun’ for the Western world. Down with it then!—Mr. Cannan is a writer of ability, but no ability can long make headway thus handicapped with an insane doctrine. René Fourmy’s life is merely a search for something that will not disgust him. Responsibility, energy, continuity—these words are not in his lexicon. But the tale is not simply an adequate picture of a talented youth yielding to one distaste after another. Our complaint is that the author does not stand outside the picture, painting it, but seems to travel hand in hand with the hero, sharing his confusion.

The book is as chaotic in incident and characterization as in philosophy. René Fourmy, who deserts first his wife and afterward the slum-girl who befriends him and is about to bear him a child, is as nebulous as a cloud. So is that Cathleen with whom he finally forms a permanent *liaison*. So is not Ann Pidduck, the slum-girl. Ann is doing the best she can according to her light, and her reward seems to be the possession of a soul. She is the only clear-cut personality in the book except René’s mother, who is also doing her best though she refuses to talk about it.

The superior clarity of these characters is the author’s involuntary tribute to the power of consistency and a definite code—things of which, one judges, he entirely disapproves.

The ethical topsy-turviness of the book produces a slight, steady nausea in the general reader, who feels as if he were in an aquarium watching the motions of lower forms of life—creatures of the sea-ooze sliding through an alien element, staring at one with glassy eyes, perpetually opening and closing ghostly mouths, yet emitting no sound. It is like a nightmare or a drug-dream. Only in occasional speeches of the artist Kilner, hopelessly pursuing a beauty he sees but cannot represent, does one come in contact with comprehensible life. It is all very curious and modern; it is interesting symptomatically, but it is horribly full of ptomaines.

Until you have read *Young Earnest*, *The Second Blooming*<sup>1</sup> seems a depressing, carnal, and characteristically urban product. Afterward, it appears suddenly clear that there are depths beyond depths, like the circles of the Inferno, in the work of these young Englishmen condemned to the life and outlook of towns. By comparison with Cannan, Mr. George’s new book suddenly takes on the startling and incongruous aspect of a struggle for the higher life! Undeniably the most illuminating part of *The Second Blooming* is its dedication to H. G. Wells, whom the author hails as ‘one who turned the strongest light upon the complexities of his day, showed me my fellow man struggling through endless misunderstandings and pains toward a hidden good; restored to me a trust I had thought dead in the good that will not die; shook scales from my eyes and filled those eyes with dreams; bade me harbor no illusion and yet nurse hope; showed me I might love

<sup>1</sup> *The Second Blooming*. By W. L. GEORGE. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

that which I despised, because men must not bear the burden of my arrogance.'

This sincere and noble ascription gives us pause. If we are accustomed to think of Wells as reflective and clever but much at sea and quite without a vital doctrine, we perceive there is a Cimmerian darkness to which the gray glimmers of Wells seem light indeed. And from *Young Earnest* one may learn where that darkness lies.

Mr. George sees humanity mainly as caught in the net of the flesh, and, in general, not struggling. He looks forth upon a world of human creatures at the mercy of their leaping blood and utterly without data of conduct wherewith to judge and rectify impulse. The present novel deals with three sisters, one of whom invests the surplus vitality of the late twenties in political work for her husband; the second takes a lover, and the affair is treated at length in the Gallic manner; the third adds to an already large family. Discussing these various activities in the last chapter, they agree that everything, even mistakes and sins, makes one bigger in the end and fitter for more life. Mary, the domestic character, sums up this wisdom in talking of marriage. 'We've got to take it as it is and see what we can do. Anyhow, not to be lazy and have a good time.' — If this sounds inadequate as a principle, consider that it means that life is what we make of it and should be spent in service, not in self-indulgence. This is enough light to live by — but decent folk learned these things in their cradles! It seems no tremendous discovery; yet when you consider the absolute anarchy of Mr. Cannan's people, you perceive that Mary, Grace, and Clara have really gone some distance on an upward path. Hereafter, apparently, we must estimate character and achievement by the degree of its removal from entire personal law-

lessness and self-seeking. If Cannan's René Fourmy has no other distinction, he at least marks the absolute zero of moral perception and effort. As a type for representation, this is as legitimate as another; as an example for imitation, it is obviously anti-social. Assuredly one gets from the book, fevered and confused as it is, the notion that it is intended for propaganda. We need not be afraid that Christian morality and altruism cannot take care of themselves, but we are justified in supposing that literature may suffer if many promising talents follow this path.

What emerges from the consideration of these books is the existence of a school of young novelists who, having assumed, perhaps hastily, that there is no God in the world, are ransacking life for some kind of a substitute, conducting their investigations, still incomplete and rather crude, before our eyes. Mr. Cannan believes in following the individual will wherever it leads. May one infer him on this evidence a disciple of Nietzsche? It is but a poor philosophy for any Englishman in this year 1915! Mr. George believes that life itself will teach us how to live — as indeed it will, but unhappily too late for our great profit in this world.

In *The Good Shepherd*<sup>1</sup> we have a much more genuine account of a young man's first encounter with life than in *Young Earnest*. Edwards, a young American surgeon, becomes involved in a scandal at home and exiles himself on account of it to Austria, where he does post-graduate work. He seeks an appointment as communal doctor in a remote Tyrolean village because he needs work as well as the healing which work brings. Restless, unhappy, tormented in body and mind, blundering along, making both medical and moral 'breaks,' he nevertheless finds the heal-

<sup>1</sup> *The Good Shepherd*. By JOHN ROLAND. New York: F. A. Stokes Co.

ing he so sadly needs — because you can't honestly try to be of a little use to other people without getting far more than you give. This is a fact as basal as gravitation. Why should it not be as widely acknowledged? One does n't like to speak of the two youths in the same breath, but Edwards undergoes the mental fevers, the disgusts, that shake René Fourmy. He rids himself of them, not by disregarding every human tie but by the diametrically opposite method. We call Mr. Cannan's attention to that method, not because it is Christian, not because it is decent, not because it has the authority of two thousand years of experiment behind it, but because *it is the only way that works*. The book, while at one point too spectacular, is powerful, human, sane. John Roland, whose name is new to our fiction, has done a vital piece of work.

*The Child at the Window*,<sup>1</sup> by William Hewlett, seems to mark him of the same school of thought as Mr. George, and the *Fidelity*<sup>2</sup> of Miss Glaspell gives a similar impression. One regrets the vanished charm of this young writer's earliest work. The heroine, a nice girl in a pleasant town, goes away with a married man whose wife refuses to divorce him for some twelve years. When she finally does so, the overwhelming emotion which had justified the elopement in the girl's own mind has long since vanished. She refuses to marry the man and leaves him in order to remain faithful to the feeling once experienced. Her philosophy is that what she has undergone lives in her — that she is not throwing away her past, but is preserving it, by breaking with it and moving on to find whatever else life holds in store. Conceivably a great book might be written around this

theme, but to produce it would require great detachment as well as insight. Miss Glaspell's sympathies are too strictly limited to the under-dog to allow her to give a justly proportioned picture of human life.

The atmosphere of depression, of spiritual and mental squalor, that broods so thickly over these novels in which men and women no longer know blue skies, green grass, and the grace of God, is in itself enough to condemn their reasoning! Taking the matter by and large, the great novelist is one who says 'Yea!' to life unflinching, while lesser men say 'Nay!' or 'But —'

Of course it would be absurd to imply that the line of cleavage between those novelists who have the courage to assent to life and these others who refuse to do so, imagining vain things, is wholly a matter of country or city living — even though we find the mass of city and country dwellers lined up in the same way upon the same issue. There are other ingredients of immense importance in the situation. Still, certain facts become distinct as we contemplate the question. The problems of the city and of malignant industrialism are fatally interwoven — that is one fact. And even under most favorable urban conditions, men are indubitably shut off from a 'something' that affects their poise and well-being favorably — that is another fact. Whether this 'something' is a mere matter of more oxygen in the air, or whether life in the open also favors the inrush of that something-not-ourselves without which our spirits become stagnant and poisoned, one dares not affirm. The matter is hardly one for dogmatic assertion.

The propagandist says 'Nay!' with differing degrees of violence, according to the amount of true artist in his composition. *The Harbor*,<sup>1</sup> by Ernest Poole,

<sup>1</sup> *The Harbor*. By ERNEST POOLE. New York: The Macmillan Co.

<sup>1</sup> *The Child at the Window*. By WILLIAM HEWLETT. New York: Duffield Co.

<sup>2</sup> *Fidelity*. By SUSAN GLASPELL. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co.

is a propaganda very gracefully mitigated by a clear perception of the visible world, of which Mr. Poole makes very admirable pictures. Where *The Harbor* deals with the outer world it is imaginative, vivid, charming; where it deals with the soul of man it is inexpert, almost bungling; yet it is sincere always, candid and restrained. The hero is brought up on Brooklyn Heights, and New York Harbor obsesses his fancy from his earliest years. He sees it in a hundred different aspects and always with direct effect upon his inner life. All these aspects pass vividly before us. The Harbor is by turns mysterious, grim, revolting, wonderful, glorious, organized for efficiency, organized for slavery, as the years move by. The boy grows up, becomes a free-lance journalist, goes to Paris to 'learn to write'; comes home to do 'glory-stories' of the Harbor, its life, energy, and wealth; marries an unusually fine woman, daughter of the man who had taught him that efficiency will save the world if you give it time; takes part in a strike of dock-laborers. He feels the 'crowd-spirit' in the strikers and finally casts in his lot with them. He tells us that all his gods have passed: the god of religion, of art, of efficiency, each one of which in turn he believed could save the world. Last of all comes the god of the crowd-spirit. Perhaps this too may pass, he admits, but this is where we leave him. He is a convinced syndicalist because his contact with the crowd-spirit has made him feel that where men are brought together in a unity of purpose such as the strikers felt, there evolves from them an intelligence swifter than their individual intelligences, which — he trusts — will guide them safely where they wish to go.

The amount of faith involved in this belief is rather tremendous! We know no religion that demands so much. This infallibility of the crowd-spirit

upon which the hero of the Harbor leans the whole weight of his last religion does not at all accord with the investigations of those scientists who have specialized upon the psychology of crowds. They, indeed, affirm that the crowd functions upon a distinctly lower and more brutal plane than does the individual. However, the weakness of the young man's final conversion does not lie so much in this undeniable fact as in that other fact that none of the religions he professes to have had, and lost, have ever gripped his spirit. The reader sizes him up on abundant evidence as an emotionalist, — a nice fellow but rather shallow, rather neurotic, highly excitable. He will always, one sees, be converted by the thing that has the most 'thrill' in it at the moment. He seeks to be played upon by life, never to shape his own share of it in the image of his living will — yet this alone is worthy living, and to this every unit of the crowd must come before its salvation can deserve the name.

While the syndicalism of Mr. Poole's hero does not carry conviction or look like the path of salvation, it nevertheless appears a more wholesome reaction to life than the individualism of *Young Earnest*. It may be equally impossible, but it is not equally disgusting.

One may affirm that while the American novelist, no less than his English contemporary, is searching for a new morality, a new religion, he has in general greater resilience and greater hopefulness. His work may be more superficial but it is also — even when, like *The Harbor*, it is most a product of the city and its problems — more oxygenated, less oppressive.

In *The Turmoil*,<sup>1</sup> distrust of the city, its bigness, soot, prosperity, and their effect on modern man, again rises into articulate, forcible statement. For Mr.

<sup>1</sup> *The Turmoil*. By BOOTH TARKINGTON. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Tarkington's book as for Miss Canfield's, there is first of all the justification of the tale well told. *The Turmoil* is distinctly the author's strongest and best work. If he goes on doing things as large, as romantic, as real, we shall have little more to ask. Whatever faults the book may have, it is certain that the reader will be too much absorbed in it to notice them — which is another way of saying that it exhibits the story-teller's gift in greater degree than any other novel of the year. This gift and the art built upon it often seem nowadays to be traveling rapidly toward extinction. Novels are numerous; good stories exceeding rare. You have only to compare *The Turmoil* with *The Harbor* to see the inherent and everlasting differences between a 'born' novel which sets forth certain very strong convictions, and a brilliant piece of reporting plus propaganda. The former is unified, integral; the latter is not.

Bibbs Sheridan of *The Turmoil*, born a poet, is also the son of a manufacturer who wants him to learn the business 'from the ground up.' His brothers embrace this life happily, but the first six months send Bibbs into prolonged nervous prostration, to his father's vast disgust. Old Sheridan is really a tremendous piece of characterization. The big, self-made man of thirty years ago — powerful, boasting, blustering, full of tender affection, ability, vulgarity, and vituperation — is set before us as he lived. The thing is a masterpiece. The other characters live also, but not with this robust completeness. Sheridan's native town was once a kindly place where grass grew and gardens blossomed and humanity flourished as it used to in those old-fashioned towns our fathers innocently called 'cities.' Sheridan did more than one man's share to make it huge, noisy, smoky, hideous, and he desires his sons to do as much as he for 'bigness' to blight the

town still further. The book tells of the harnessing of Bibbs to serve the city's gods. Bibbs who wants to possess his soul, Bibbs who wants the beautiful, the serene, is forced into business again, and learns that one can feed zinc to a clipping-machine crashing sixty-eight times a minute quite happily if only one is encouraged to imagine that a friend — Mary Vertrees to wit — is standing at one's side. With the death of one brother and the collapse of another, Bibbs is forced to take his place in the business, as a Sheridan indeed. He solves the problem of his individual life, but the problem of Bigness is left unanswered save by the hope that out of the turmoil will finally come better things. In the turmoil the gods are working, — that the whole world feels just now as never before, — but dare we believe they are indeed working to produce our promised land, a 'noble and joyous city, unbelievably white?'

*Red Fleece*<sup>1</sup> is pacifist propaganda. But for all that it is full of fire, and it comes curiously near greatness in places, by virtue of the utter sincerity of its author. He takes a young war-correspondent in the present struggle and converts him to peace doctrines through the horrors of war on the Russian frontier. So far, so good. It is what ought to happen, and probably is happening, times without number. But when the young correspondent casts in his lot with those Russian revolutionists who go to and fro among the soldiers urging them to throw down their arms, few readers follow him. For it does not take more than a grain of the saving salt of common sense to know that all soldiers will not do this. What is bound to happen is that the soldiers of the most militant nations will not heed the insidious whisper. Should the soldiers of the less militant nations listen, the result

<sup>1</sup> *Red Fleece*. By WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT. New York: George H. Doran Co.



would be to fasten very firmly on the bent shoulders of the world, the yoke of militarism and autocracy. Even a pacifist should be willing to die fighting to prevent this! For it would be the final thwarting of the long human hope.

'Propaganda' is, of course, a very convenient rock of a word to fling at the young writer eagerly desiring to instruct us in his creed while he tells us a story. But is it not probable that art and instruction are at variance only when the instruction is inadequate? Great art and the perfect propaganda may well join hands some far-off day. We do not know what the perfect propaganda is, nor when it will appear. We only know by reading the fiction offered by advocates of this or that panacea that it is not yet present with us. In our experience thus far, the good novel has been the novel that confined its solutions to the individual case. Thus far, the novel that attempted solutions of the general case has always failed as a novel. Yet should the day come when I read something I recognize as a great novel and find it promulgating social doctrine — in that day I expect to become a convert to that doctrine. But, clearly, its hour is not yet!

One does not feel disposed to say 'propaganda' to Mr. Winston Churchill, yet any consideration of *A Far Country*<sup>1</sup> must admit that it is not a novel in any strict sense of the word. And it is distinctly instructive. It is the inner history of Hugh Paret, born idealist and artist, who willingly invests his mental capital in the work of a corporation lawyer of the venal type. Yet he never loses the possibilities inherent in his real self, and after years of eating indigestible, gilded husks and consorting with particularly plutocratic swine, he reverts, with the slow, prodigious push of events, to a simpler,

worthier life. Paret, who tells his own tale in the first person, announces it as the biography of his soul. This removes it at once from the usual category of novels. We know — from *Coniston* and *Mr. Crewe's Career* — that Mr. Churchill is amply able to write vigorous, closely woven, absorbing novels in which he handles corporate greed and kindred sins scathingly enough. This time he is not doing that kind of book. Frankly, however, that kind is more influential, because it interests more keenly the greater number of readers. But the author has obviously reached that period of middle life when he feels the need to express his philosophy more fully than the strict novel-form permits. We accept what he offers gladly — for he has earned the right to choose his own mode of expression. The book is mature, thoughtful, — perhaps too thoughtful, — hopeful. Hugh Paret's reaction against materialism is not clearly spiritual throughout, but he is played upon and moved about and converted by life — and life is definitely spiritual in all its final implications.

Hermann Krebs, the despised antagonist who does more than any other human agent to lure Paret from his husks, is less consistent than one believes such a man would be. He announces reason as man's only guide — yet he himself leans heavily, confidently, explicitly, upon the power of what he calls 'that Thing-Other-Than-Ourselves' which gave us reason and gives us momentum toward good. Does one apprehend that Thing solely by the searching of reason? the reader asks as Job asked long ago, — and the answer can never be Yes. Mr. Churchill apparently believes the doctrine of intuition too easily abused to proclaim. This does not impair the value of his thoughtful, broad-minded work, but it suggests that he himself has not yet gone to the end of that road which the thoughtful must travel.

<sup>1</sup> *A Far Country*. By WINSTON CHURCHILL. New York: The Macmillan Co.



The summer's fiction is not all serious; yet books for the tired business man, heretofore such staples in the trade, are sparsely offered this season. He who has long demanded excitement, adventure, gore, has no need to-day to seek those things in fiction, and the supply has suddenly fallen away. *The Lone Star Ranger*,<sup>1</sup> tale of a 'bad man' who became one of the Texas Mounted Police, is almost the only one of its kind. There are a few detective stories. *The Valley of Fear*,<sup>2</sup> by Conan Doyle, seems to be based upon the remote exploits of the Molly Maguires; and G. K. Chesterton contributes *The Wisdom of Father Brown*.<sup>3</sup> Chesterton is always worth while, but these stories fail to develop his most characteristic and approved flavors. It is rather like putting mayonnaise on spice-cakes. Why squander such perfect mayonnaise? The truth is that there is too little Chesterton in this world for any of the precious stuff to be wasted. Let other folk do detective stories.

There are three interesting novels inspired by that great, and still inchoate, region, the Farther West. *The Rim of the Desert*,<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Anderson's carefully worked out and most romantic story, centres in a dead man's dream of the redemption of a certain arid but wonderful valley in the Columbia River country. It is of such dreams that the West is made, and Mrs. Anderson's instinct for the ideal elements in her material is quick and certain. *Sundown Slim*<sup>5</sup> is another lovable hobo hero from the hands of the maker of *Overland Red*.

Mr. Knibbs has had the inspiration to make Slim peaceful to cowardice and then to entrust to his hands the tangle of a feud between 'sheep-men' and 'cattle-men' in Arizona. *Still Jim*<sup>6</sup> deals with the problems of the Reclamation Service in the great Southwest, as well as with those of the hero. Still Jim is a young engineer nursing the fine ambition to set the mark of the New England Puritan on the face of that wonder-country near the Mexican border, so that all men may know it in ages to come. He comes near failing in his work, and is told quite frankly and, one fears, with much truth, that the reason the New Englander has failed to stamp the America of the future indelibly as his own, is that he is out of touch with the mass of humanity and will not take pains to teach them his ideals. It is to be hoped that a good many of the old blood will ponder Mrs. Willsie's conclusion. It is worth it.

I am thinking there will be a rising demand for idyls, tales of home and peace and love, to counteract the sterner things the world is forced to read of. Some publishers have begun to prepare for that demand. *August First*<sup>7</sup> is a pretty love-story which has absolutely nothing to do with the war. *A Cloistered Romance*<sup>8</sup> is a truly charming tale whose action takes place in the house of The Little Sisters of the Poor, where the hero is carried after an accident. *The Seven Darlings*,<sup>9</sup> by Gouverneur Morris, might have been written by Robert Chambers. The author of *Martha of the Mennonite Country*<sup>10</sup> has

<sup>1</sup> *The Lone Star Ranger*. By ZANE GREY. New York: Harper & Bros.

<sup>2</sup> *The Valley of Fear*. By A. CONAN DOYLE. New York: George H. Doran Co.

<sup>3</sup> *The Wisdom of Father Brown*. By G. K. CHESTERTON. New York: John Lane Co.

<sup>4</sup> *The Rim of the Desert*. By ADA WOODRUFF ANDERSON. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

<sup>5</sup> *Sundown Slim*. By HENRY H. KNIBBS. Boston & New York: Houghton, Mifflin Co.

<sup>6</sup> *Still Jim*. By HONORÉ WILLISIE. New York: F. A. Stokes Co.

<sup>7</sup> *August First*. By M. R. S. ANDREWS and R. I. MURRAY. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>8</sup> *A Cloistered Romance*. By FLORENCE OLMSTEAD. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>9</sup> *The Seven Darlings*. By GOUVERNEUR MORRIS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>10</sup> *Martha of the Mennonite Country*. By HELEN R. MARTIN. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

the unusual gift of actually vitalizing an old-fashioned plot. The story contains a maltreated step-daughter, a millionaire disguised as a country school-teacher, a rich uncle who comes home to die and conceals his wealth to test the affection of his relatives. These are faded properties, but Mrs. Martin's people really live, and therefore can convince us of almost anything. The authors of *The Rose Garden Husband*<sup>1</sup> and *The Diary of a Beauty*<sup>2</sup> have something of the same dexterity, the same belief in the dear old miracles.

The quality of most of the novels that we have been considering inevitably implies that the need of the English-reading world just now is felt to be philosophy rather than art. But as the philosophy offered us in fictional form is for the most part acrid and irritating, it accomplishes little. One may say that the frivolous fiction of the season is too meagre for entertainment; the serious fiction, too inadequate for salvation. There remains a mere handful of books whose preoccupation is art. We should, doubtless, be thankful that any such are left, instead of being querulous that they are few. It is good to turn from the heat and conflict of the day to tales that aim to mirror life rather than to dogmatize about it. *The Great Tradition*<sup>3</sup> may be classified among these. This second volume of Mrs. Gerould's admirable stories again shows us the distinction of her style as a thing to be savored at leisure. The title-story, *The Weaker Vessel*, and *Leda and the Swan* are equal to her best. If *The Miracle* seems a little tenuous, not so much in thought as in handling, and if the observation of the squalid domestic

comedy in *Wesendonck* is too faintly tempered with sympathy for the embittered participants, these are, after all, slight complaints to make of one who herself faithfully carries on in literature, as one of her heroines in morals, the great tradition of a worthier day.

Maurice Hewlett goes far afield for the material of *A Lovers' Tale*.<sup>4</sup> He shows us a Sentimental Tommy born in Iceland during Viking days. He says he has merely retold the original saga of Cormac and Stangerd, interpreting a little the human nature found in it. Stangerd inspires Cormac's songs, which is Cormac's chief demand of a lady-love. When his emotions thicken and humanize, he grows less and less joyous, until he finally refuses to appear on his wedding-day. No one understands his case, least of all Cormac himself. But we have advanced in self-analysis, if in nothing else, these last fifteen hundred years. Cormac could now learn in any circulating library that poets make poor lovers, because of their overwhelming interest in the play of their own emotions. Miss May Sinclair, Barrie, and many lesser lights have described all the phenomena. The matter is, on the whole, more interesting to the poets than to any one else.

Whether one cares, or does not care, for any given tale by James Lane Allen, one must accord to all of them a virtue sadly rare. His stories have been thought about, worked upon, to such an extent that any movement made by any character has its significance, its content of emotion. This content of emotion is extracted to the last drop. The trivial, the unconsidered, is given no place. You may not be in accord with his interpretation of life — you do not have to be — but if you are an honest workman yourself, you are bound to be in accord with his workmanship.

<sup>4</sup> *A Lovers' Tale*. By MAURICE HEWLETT. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>1</sup> *The Rose Garden Husband*. By MARGARET WIDDEMER. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

<sup>2</sup> *The Diary of a Beauty*. By MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

<sup>3</sup> *The Great Tradition*. By KATHARINE F. GEROULD. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

And it is bound to impress you the more as you contrast it with the mass of novel-writing. Its clear-cut outlines, its polished surfaces, its rounded edges, take on, somehow, the dignity and loveliness of old mahogany. This circumambieny of thought — what Henry James calls the author's 'saturation' — gives atmosphere and mellowness, and it is the only thing which can impart these qualities. They are present to an unusual degree in *The Sword of Youth*.<sup>1</sup> The story is of a ruined Kentucky home whose last son leaves his mother, in anger, to enlist in the Confederate army, yet returns when she sends for him in her final illness, at the cost, as he believes, of both life and honor. Dealing with the Kentucky of which he wrote at the beginning but has somewhat neglected of late, the novel should be classified with Mr. Allen's most characteristic as well as his ripest work.

Though George Agnew Chamberlain has not the definite art, the mastery of material, possessed by Mr. Allen, *Through Stained Glass*<sup>2</sup> associates itself with the foregoing tale by virtue of an atmosphere, an aroma. It also is a book with a bouquet. The gist of it lies in the way a father educates his only son by epigrams hammered out of his own past experiences. And by education, 'a gentleman means skill in the handling of life.' The story has plenty of incident, but it is all subordinate to the philosophy of the old aristocrat. This philosophy, it is worth noting, is far more spiritual as well as more finely flavored than that of any of the young democrats and reformers whose work we have been pondering. Alcoholic comparisons have gone out in this day when nation-wide prohibition has so

nearly come in; nevertheless one is tempted to say that the utterances of Leighton père, when compared to these others, are as old Amontillado to raw spirits.

So we come at last, somewhat heavy-footed, to the finest thing that the season offers. It is Joseph Conrad's *Victory*.<sup>3</sup> Since Henry James has ceased to write novels, Conrad is the ablest exponent of the great method in English fiction. He lays hold of any subject that pleases him — one might almost say, of any subject that happens along. In this case it is the lonely life and tragic death of a man and woman on an inconsiderable isle in the South Seas. To the ordinary observer, Axel Heyst and the girl Lena seem to matter as little in the scheme of things as two human creatures possibly can. One might consider their lives and deaths 'worth' two inches of newspaper space at the most. They are even as the two sparrows sold for a farthing, in their unimportance and obscurity. Conrad takes these negligible folk, their remote beginnings, their horror-smear end, and soaks himself in the subject till he can give off nothing about them that is not loaded with absorbing interest, with profound significance. He makes a great drama, charged with pity and terror, of these few weeks of their hidden life moving swiftly to its end. He sees them somewhat as one may reverently hope the Creator sees us all. At least, he sees them with crystal clearness, with absolute detachment, yet with a yearning pity, a vast gentleness. To be able to project one's self thus into this or that human situation, to saturate one's self with it, to give it forth again completely, is art indeed, but art at such a marvelous pitch that it deserves some other, some yet greater name.

<sup>1</sup> *The Sword of Youth*. By JAMES LANE ALLEN. New York: The Century Co.

<sup>2</sup> *Through Stained Glass*. By GEORGE AGNEW CHAMBERLAIN. New York: The Century Co.

<sup>3</sup> *Victory*. By JOSEPH CONRAD. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

## TO ONE WHO HAS SUFFERED LONG

BY NANCY BYRD TURNER

I DREAMED that you were well again.  
Last midnight, in the gloom,  
Suddenly through my sleep I heard  
You singing in your room.

It was a little lilting song  
With a quick-wrought refrain  
Your heart had caught and captured long  
Before it thought of pain;

A rhyme that chanted, ballad-wise,  
Of light and lovely years  
You knew before your blessed eyes  
Had ever dreamed of tears.

It sounded there, in that sad dark,  
Like a bright river, free  
From winter bondage — outward set  
To the blue, living sea.

The little lightfoot gay refrain  
Went singing, fresh and sweet  
As a cool wind across a plain  
Long sick with summer heat.

And joy, pure joy, it cried to me,  
One glad, reiterant word —  
The angels broke their minstrelsy  
To hear the thing I heard.

My rapture waked me. Old gray light  
 Was on the hills of men.  
 I prayed the God of the good night  
 That I might sleep again.

## ADVENTURES IN PHILOSOPHY

BY ELLWOOD HENDRICK

### I

#### A LITTLE HOMILY ON THE TRUTH

WE sorely need a clearer conception of the truth. We need it in the business of living; especially as a means of avoiding misunderstandings. If we have an abstract idea of what the truth is, we are less likely to err in the belief that we are right before we know the truth. In adventuring upon a theory which for the past few years has seemed to me to hold, we shall hardly be charged with applying new meanings to old words if we say that facts and the truth are not the same. Facts are parts of the truth, just as wheels, rods, levers, and the like, are parts of a machine. If we say 'the whole truth' every time we refer to the truth, it might make the idea more clear, but let us agree to consider it so, without the need of saying two words where one will do.

If you strike me, that becomes a fact as soon as you have done it. Whether you have struck me or not is a question of fact and not a question of truth. The truth may be that you struck me to call my attention to impending danger, or you may have struck me in anger, or the blow may be an unimportant episode in a long fight between us.

VOL. 116 - NO. 4

The truth, as I conceive it, is all the facts in their right or correct relation; the relation which they must bear to each other when the truth is attained. Thus the truth becomes an abstract thing, because we know *what* it is, although we may not know *it*. Rarely, indeed, are we able to gather all the facts in relation to a subject, on the one hand, or to correlate them, on the other; nevertheless we must do this if we would know the truth.

If this definition is unfamiliar, if we are not accustomed to consider the truth in this sense, I think it will do us no harm to bear it in mind. In courts of law, according to current practice, it might not hold, but we are fortunately under no obligation to order our thinking according to processes of law.

If we exalt the truth and reverence it, the glib and hysterical brothers and sisters who, grasping a single fact, proceed to preach that and that only as the truth, will cause us less annoyance. We may acknowledge their facts as facts, — which is all they can ask of us. If we still remain unconvinced of the truth of their preachments we shall be contradicting no one. The truth is very great, very large, and when Lessing prayed that to him be given the priv-

ilege to seek the truth rather than to know it, because to know it he was not worthy, he spoke as one of the wisest of men. To seek it, to get nearer to it, sometimes perhaps to get a glimpse of it, is all that we may hope for; it is the best that we can do.

Suppose you and I look at a tree on a hillside. We see only the leaves, and we observe that the tree is green. The tree *is* green; that is a fact. Let us make a note of it. Then suppose we go a distance away and look at it again. The tree is blue. It is idle for us to say, 'It seems blue but it really is green,' because our very organs which gave the reaction of green a while ago now give the reaction of blue. By the same token that the tree was green when we saw it near by, it is blue when we see it from afar. So let us make a second note: the tree is blue. Here we have two contradictory statements of fact, neither false, and yet neither the whole truth. The truth about the color of the tree involves a great range of subjects, including the physics of light, the anatomy and physiology of the human eye, photo-chemistry, — in short, a vast store of learning and understanding.

Many facts which seem irreconcilable become harmonious parts of the truth when all the facts are arranged in their right order. So the truth should make us humble, and patient with one another. None of us has faculties of universal coördination, and our blind spots, instead of being little delinquencies of perception, are in reality vast areas. The most we can claim is that we have a few sighted spots. To see all the facts in their right relation is what we might call The Olympian Vision.

## II

### THE GREEN TREE

The first time I visited Charlotte, North Carolina, I had some business to

transact with a charming, soft-spoken old gentleman who wore a broad-brimmed felt hat. When our business was completed for the day, we walked leisurely about the town. 'Charlotte,' said the gentleman of the sombrero, 'is all to' up over a dispute which is ragin' amongst our people.' 'What is the cause of it?' I asked. 'Free Grace and Fo'-ordination,' he answered.

I was delighted, and wrote a long letter home about it that night. Charlotte seemed so very archaic! This was many years ago, and since then Charlotte has grown to be a great manufacturing town with a grand hotel and clubs and all the things that modern industry and wealth bring about. In those days there were the Presbyterians and Baptists on the one side and the Methodists and Lutherans on the other, and the adherents of the little Episcopal church, who were divided on the question. These included substantially the whole white population. Now, unless I am sorely mistaken, Charlotte has ceased to worry over 'Free Grace and Fo'-ordination'; she is modern and up-to-date. But if my surmise be correct, she has gone backward intellectually; she only thinks herself modern; she has become commercial and has ceased to participate in the intellectual life of the day. For the old question whereby Charlotte was 'all to' up' abides in philosophy. Turn whichever way we will, we meet that same old nagging problem, teasing us on the one hand with what seems to be proof that we have no free will at all, and insisting on the other that a very good reason why we have free will is because we know we have it.

Many of us have ceased to be Presbyterians or Baptists or Methodists or Episcopalians, but as soon as we venture into biology we find ourselves urged to join either the Mechanist or the Vitalist denomination, and there



we find the same old dispute, raging again among our biological people.

This is, indeed, the comedy domain of philosophy. The Greeks used to dispute over it. St. Paul appeared to have the problem solved, and so did St. Augustine. Pelagius differed from them and so did his followers, — with some warmth. The harmony between Luther and John Calvin over the matter was not striking, Servetus had an opinion which went up in smoke, the savants of Charlotte, North Carolina, talked themselves out over it, — and now behold the biologists in battle array! If it were given to us to live to a prodigious number of years and to observe the earth from afar, we should see the philosophers in dispute over this problem throughout the ages, never agreeing and never persuading each other. It is a very enduring subject.

But is not this dispute over the question whether we have free will or not very like a dispute that we might engage in over the color of a tree: whether it be green or blue? It hardly seems worth while to boast or to grow angry in protesting that we have absolute free will, when a little surgical operation of one sort or another, or a shock, or a blow upon the head, may change our nature entirely. Why not proceed along the mechanistic way, seeking the mechanical, physical, and chemical causes of every act, and thus gather as many facts as we can? If every act seems to be a response to a stimulus, why deny it? We shall not have achieved the truth when we have learned the exact process of every act, but we shall be much wiser than we are now. We shall advance toward the truth when we learn the relation to each other of those processes of which we are now so ignorant. And if from the study of the facts at hand, we reach the conclusion that we have no free will at all, but are mere automata, with

no power of choice or selection throughout our lives, is it not time to pause and admit that we may not have all the facts, yet? Also that such as we have may not be in their right order before our vision?

There are some verses by John Godfrey Saxe, called 'The Blind Men and the Elephant,' which are very instructive. According to Saxe, six wise men of Indoostan, all of them very wise, but all of them blind, went to see the elephant. One examined its side and declared the elephant was very like a wall; another, feeling its trunk, was sure the elephant was very like a snake; another concluded from its leg that it was very like a tree; another, examining one of its tusks, knew that the elephant was very like a spear; the expert who examined its ear found it to resemble a fan; and the authority who grasped its tail was equally certain that the elephant was very like a rope. According to the legend they are still disputing over it.

Now the truth is bigger than an elephant, and our vision of it is narrower than the observations of each of the blind men. And we should bear in mind that they were right, every one of them. Each had a fact; none knew the truth. None had a theory of the truth; each knew what he knew, and that was enough for him. We can well imagine one of them saying, 'If a thing is so, it's so, and you can't get around it; my senses bear me witness; the elephant is very like a snake.'

If we have a good working method of dealing with facts, it is a good thing to hold to it, just as we do well to hold fast to the fact that the tree is green when we look at it from near by. It seems to be a part of the truth. And the mechanistic theory, which will have nothing to do with spooks or ghosts, or with vital sparks with qualities that are not material, is helpful, wholesome,

and illuminating. It makes for clean thinking. It will not countenance the Pickwickian point of view, which is very popular and current in this our day. It provides that facts be gathered by observation and the study of cause and effect. It also seems to lead to the conclusion that every act is the only one possible under conditions as they exist. Now, if this reasoning appears sound, let us, instead of frothing at the mouth and denouncing the sincere men who have reached these conclusions, admit it — as a part of the truth.

If through another chain of reasoning, or through consciousness, or by any other means, we come to a conclusion opposed to this, there is no occasion to boast that the first conclusion is disproved. If we reach both conclusions, we may know that we have not yet achieved the truth, but for aught we know both may be right. That we have free will and that we have not free will may be, both of them, parts of the truth, just as the opposed statements that the tree is green and that it is blue are parts of the truth.

We may say that the whole organization of human conduct is based upon the free will of the individual; but the organization of human conduct, like many another good thing, is based in large part upon fancy. When we consider acts from a near we might as well admit that free will seems to play very little if any part in them. Here is the human machine with its equipment, the consciousness including a part of that group of records and nerve-centres which are 'connected up,' the connecting up occurring automatically along the line of least resistance; and then, given the stimulus, the one and only reaction which can occur, does occur. There would need to be a difference in the equipment or the stimulus to bring about a different reaction. The conclusion, you observe, is precisely the

same as that reached by the late and occasionally lamented John Calvin, except that he maintained that every current through the colloidal content of every nerve was a special, volitional act of the Deity, 'for his own glory.'

This view, that every act is automatic if considered by itself, has great merit. If we consider it to be a part of the truth, we are likely to have far more abundant charity for one another. By it we enlarge our sympathy. For instance, we may say that everybody always does his best at the time he acts. If he does evil, there is a reason for it, a structural reason. His sympathetic equipment may be atrophied. Or he may be angry. In either case we are dealing with facts close at hand and our business is with his condition. The cause of it may be due to his grandfather, or to a false leading in his early childhood. We should diagnose his case and determine what part of his equipment is atrophied or what part so congested that his way was the path of crime. And if he is angry we should regard him as a nervous invalid until his attack is over and the anger bodies are eliminated from his system, or until his injured brain-cells are restored.

There is a wonderful book by Dr. Crile, lately published, on *The Origin and Nature of the Emotions*,<sup>1</sup> that is very illuminating about anger. He postulates that by evolution we have developed what he calls 'nociceptors,' which give the warning of pain in the presence of danger, and that these warnings are given according to the experience of the race. The equipment provides against such external injuries as the goring and tearing of an animal's teeth in far greater measure than against the more modern devices of swift-moving bullets and very sharp in-

<sup>1</sup> *The Origin and Nature of the Emotions*, by GEORGE N. CRILE, M.D. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company.

struments, because the experience of the race against teeth is so much greater than with bullets and swords. It is imaginable that if a sword were sharp enough and thin enough and swung with sufficient speed, the old Chinese legend of the master headsman might almost escape fiction. In this, it may be recalled, the executioner graciously gave a pinch of snuff to each of his victims, who remained comfortably unaware that his head had been severed from his body. By the sneezes which followed the perfect swordsmanship was revealed; the heads rolled off, and the surprised offenders proceeded to die with all haste and propriety.

Another interesting warning is found in the fact that we are ticklish in our ears and nostrils and on the soles of our feet, where buzzing insects are likely to sting.

Now in danger these warnings elicit the response either of flight or of turning and facing it, and so we become either afraid or angry. Dr. Crile notes two features in connection with these emotions which are interesting in regard to what we are discussing: he finds that during the processes of anger and fear we suffer inhibitions of all other faculties than those which are of value in fighting or running away. We are useless, inefficient, incompetent, in every other respect. When we are angry we have not our normal equipment because the greater part is blocked off, and we are no more our complete selves than when, if ever, we are very drunk. The second observation is that under anger or fear there occurs a destruction of brain-cells that are but slowly repaired, and, under stress of severe and prolonged emotion, the brain is permanently injured. These notes have been vastly illuminating to me in regard to the dreadful war which now rages, and I think we may well pause to consider how difficult the recovery will be after

it is over, when so many minds that are crippled by passion must attempt the work that calls for entire men.

The Man of Wrath with a great lust to kill ceases to inspire us. We know that he is of value in hand-to-hand combats, but he is a nuisance, and even worse, in a fight where cool heads and steady hands are needed for machine guns. He is potential in instigating war but he is incompetent to end it. He is a drum-major of anarchy.

We also learn that the emotional hurrah of the man in high authority is evidence that he is unfit for his job, because under emotion his qualities of judgment are paralyzed and his sense of coördination is atrophied.

While confining ourselves to the mechanistic point of view, we may describe judgment as the operation of selecting the best thing available to do at the time, — just as the tree reaches out toward the light, — and we may regard it as mechanical. As in a Jacquard loom the woof is run through those openings that are there, so the judgment, the determining bobbin as we might call it, passes through those channels of the mind that are open to it, and determines the act which we mechanically perform.

We may regard impulse as something different from reason if we want to, but to me the difference seems to be in name rather than in fact. If judgment is automatic it may operate so rapidly that it skips consciousness, but that is no ground for calling it a thing apart. Under impulse we act rapidly, so that consciousness is often skipped in the process, and usually there is an emotional drive to it. An impulse seems to me to be a quick, emotional leading or drive to an act, and as much of an automatic response to stimulus as to eat when we are hungry or to drink when we are thirsty. In doing many things we skip consciousness after we are used

to doing them, although at first, when we are learning how, they involve great effort.

There are also automatic vanities which we have discussed elsewhere, of which a notable example is our disposition to justify ourselves, any time and all the time. We are apt to think that we thought, when we were acting so rapidly that the act skipped consciousness. And in explaining afterward, our sense of veracity is under the greatest strain. We fool ourselves into the belief that we deliberated over every possibility, when in fact we were following blindly the drive within us to do that which was the only possible thing that we could do under existing conditions.

### III

#### THE BLUE TREE

Free will is a long way from our acts, yet we have a constructive faculty. Although often within a very narrow range, we have the ordering of our lives in our hands. This constructive faculty is in use when we are conjuring up our ideals. We can of our own volition say, 'I shall plan my life to do this thing.' We can of our own will select a picture in our minds and hold it in our consciousness as a stimulus. More likely than not we get the idea from some one else; but such ideas, as they are given to us, become our property, to do with as we will, to adopt as ideals or to reject. Many things influence us in this; we are not as free as we think we are; we generate our own energy, and some of us are equipped with very low-power dynamos; but the process of selecting those purposes and ways of life which we project into our consciousness by our own will is the occasion of our greatest freedom.

As we grow older we become either more firm of purpose or more obedient to any stimulus; what we have made of

our lives becomes more fixed; but at no time are we complete. We may change our whole nature at fifty as well as at thirty, or fifteen, — but we are less likely to. This business of combining impressions and setting them up as ideals is the substance of our free will. We may fall short of our ideals, we may be entirely different from what we meant to be, and yet be following them as nearly as we can. The question of responsibility is: With what earnestness do we select our ideals, and with what effort do we project them into our consciousness?

The difference between achieving an ideal and performing an act is rather hazy, I'll admit; but I imagine the one to be the little push we give of our own desire and choice when a picture comes into consciousness that we want to have represent us. 'That is mine!' we say, and we proceed to conform to the picture, to drive it into consciousness, to recall it, to urge it upon ourselves until in the end we act that way, and this because we want to. The picture is the stimulus, but the process of selection seems super-mechanical. Although I cannot imagine how we can think without our thinking machines, it seems that somewhere in the process freedom has entered in and we thus become, let us say, the navigating officers of our lives. On the other hand, the direct performance of an act seems an automatic response to the strongest stimulus in the mind at the time.

This may seem like arguing in a circle, because the mechanism that we employ when we are selecting our ideals is substantially the same as that which we use when we perform an act. But the stimulus comes from within. Responsibility is a quality that we recognize, and to consider it a fiction seems premature; as though we had not yet a clear vision of the truth of the matter.

In the late Christian Herter's re-

markable and, in many respects, illuminating book called *Biologic Aspects of Human Problems*<sup>1</sup> he develops consciousness as 'awareness of self' that arises in a certain complexity of organism under certain conditions. This awareness of self becomes more abundant as what we might call the harmonious complexity of the organism increases. Now, responsibility, or the capacity to choose of our own accord, like consciousness, is a quality that seems to be present in us. It would be futile to deny consciousness because we do not understand just how and where it begins. And it seems equally idle to deny responsibility. It seems to me to be a late accompaniment of this awareness of self which we know we have, and to my way of thinking it functions when we order our lives.

So we may conceive these two statements as being parts of the truth: that whatever any one does, it is the best that he can do at the time, and also that whatever any one does, is qualified by the manner in which he has ordered his life. This idealizing ego, then, is as much a part of ourselves as are our fingers and toes. It is selective. Now, if it seems that we have no free will when we commit an act, but have free will when we order our lives, we surely have not the whole truth in hand, but the theory may lead us nearer to it.

## IV

## THE GOD IN THE MACHINE

Here I respectfully ask your pardon. Despite my protestations I have already burdened you with a definition of the truth that is not in the dictionaries, and now I am about to ask you to consider religion from a point of view that does not seem to be current. I admit frankly that it is not only dis-

tressing to the reader but also that it makes for confusion, to frame new definitions for old words as one proceeds; but, '*Gott hilf mir, ich kann nicht anders!*'

It seems to me that so far as our civilization is concerned, the concept of religion *per se* is modern. There is no Germanic word for it; in English, German, Dutch, and Scandinavian, the Latin word has been imported and substituted for faith, belief, and even dogma and theology. In the sense in which I want to use the word there is no plural. Christianity, Buddhism, Brahmanism, Judaism, Mohammedanism are not so many religions (although I must admit that the Latins, who gave us the word, would have used it in this sense): they are, let us say, faiths or beliefs or confessions. At all events, if we agree to call them such, it will leave us free to use the word religion without thinking of the minister, the Sunday-school, or the choir in which we used to sing. Of course, the minister and the Sunday-school and the church choir may have functioned as parts of religion, but to think of them as the substance of it might get them out of their right relation to the idea which I am trying to express.

In the chapter called 'The Blue Tree' we considered how we may, of our own free will, select impressions or ideas, and by making ideals of them drive them into consciousness so that they shall serve as both stimuli and inhibitions to our actions. We called this the ordering of life. In the process we are open to impressions, although we determine within ourselves, subject of course to our limitations, which of these impressions we shall select. Now, the function of providing ideals and offering them, teaching them, so that we may order our lives aright and thus approach the truth, seems to me to be the great province

<sup>1</sup> *Biologic Aspects of Human Problems*, by CHRISTIAN HERTER. New York: The Macmillan Co.



of religion. We may practice religion either with or without dogma. The man of faith may have great religious value, and again he may have no religious value at all. There are, for example, religious Christians, and, on the other hand, Christians of great piety who are not religious. The anchorite who whips and distresses himself to save his own soul is not practicing religion; he is exercising his faith. The Samaritan, who picks up the fallen wanderer by the wayside and by his act also enlarges the vision of the man he helps so that the stimulus of sympathy enters into him, is doing a religious act. Faith may be a stimulus to religious acts, and we know that it often is; but since often it is not, we may as well address ourselves to that aspect of religion which we can understand, regarding it as having to do with the ordering of our lives, and not as related to dogma or faith save as dogma or faith may induce it. Then we find that everybody has the religious equipment, just as he has a sympathetic equipment, although both may be greatly atrophied. With this in mind, although we cannot fail to recognize a conflict between science and the Bible and science and dogma, there is no conflict between science and religion.

This view of religion takes the subject out of the domain of metaphysics and mysteries, and recognizes it as a specific department of human life. By it we reach the conclusion that it is a necessary function, in which we are all interested. The truly religious man is he who helps you and me to be of positive value to the world in which we live and, in one way or another, to approach the truth. Whether he be a Christian or a Jew or anything else, is his affair, — his faith, his profession. His religion is in his ideals and his use of them.

We must have ideals. We can do no-

thing without them. And this essay is written in the sincere belief that as we approach the truth with understanding, one human problem after another will be solved. Only, we must order our lives aright or else we cannot approach the truth. We cannot, otherwise, get the facts into focus. So all the world needs religion, — to-day, it would seem, more than ever before. Dogmas that we cannot believe will not answer the purpose. Apologetics often offend more than they aid. Religion is bigger than any church or any creed or any faith, and its business is the development of a wiser and a better humanity.

# V

## INTO THE UNKNOWN

We have discussed the problem of free will and found it not very free, and yet I have tried to develop the idea that we have the ordering of our lives in our own hands. Now let us adventure further, and this time into the unknown, with analogy as our guide.

We have seen how facts are parts of the truth and that we reap confusion if we consider them as substitutes for it. We might postulate a law of arrangement, a law of order, that holds good in regard to the truth and applies also to animate and inanimate things. We see this ordering of the composite parts into their right relation in the formation of a crystal. We need not question now why the molecules join according to a mathematical scale to form a symmetrical body; suffice it for the present to observe that they do. The molecules are individual, but they group themselves into something that is not a molecule: into a crystal. We may compare a crystal to the truth, and the molecules to the facts which constitute it. Until the molecules are in their right order there is no crystal. Until



the facts are in their right order there is no truth.

We, as men and women, are composed of innumerable particles of many different kinds. Their good condition and orderly arrangement are necessary to our being. Let us consider, for example, our white blood corpuscles or leucocytes. They work with what almost appears to be intelligence in overcoming disease. They are not simple little things by any means; they are marvelously complex. They respond to a stimulus and go to work, just as we do. Sometimes they are weak, inefficient, and sick; and then we languish or die because they do not do their work. They are mechanical entities, and are subject to physical and chemical laws.

Now, we are mechanical entities and we constitute something greater than ourselves. We group ourselves artificially into nations which a congress has power to change by moving a boundary line from one side of us to the other. We divide humanity into other groups, as into families, because of immediate consanguinity, and into races, based on what appears to be a remoter consanguinity. We divide ourselves again into long-headed and broad-headed classes. The facts upon which these groupings are based do not accord with each other, nor do they tell us much about what humanity means. They are desirable facts and, in a way, it is worth knowing that some of us are of one nation and some of another; some long-headed and some broad; some one thing and others something else; but a new and greater meaning might be applied to us by a master mind, the greater anthropologist who could explain the human family as it has not been explained before.

The news of battles does not tell us what is really happening to us all; and there are problems ahead even graver

and more important than who shall win. Is not victory itself a curse to the winner who lacks the character to meet his obligations? Some day, let us hope, a wiser generation will follow that will refuse to accept the wrath and hate that we cherish, and will work diligently to repair the havoc of this war. Then perhaps the greater anthropologist will come.

Collective humanity is, indeed, a strange phenomenon. Constantly destroying itself, it is at war with half of nature and cultivates as richly as it can the other half. It has a marvelous faculty for helping itself, and then, when a part of it has achieved a high order of living and gathered in those things of the earth which it desires, there is usually a great fall, and as the years roll on, the dull, stupid toiler guides his plough over the land that once was Carthage and Nineveh. What is it that makes collective humanity sick? What was the disease of Babylon and of the forgotten city that underlies it? After all the analyses, what was the sickness of Rome? Why did Europe go to sleep for a thousand years, and what was it that killed the intellect of the Saracens? Why did Persia die?

Collective humanity is a thing, a being that grows well and is strong and valiant and that becomes godlike, and then again sickens and becomes foolish, and the spirit of it fades away until slavery under a benign master would be an advantage. Collective humanity as we see it is a great jumble of parts, related, unrelated, and in dire confusion. What is it doing? Not one of us can tell.

Now let us imagine leucocytes to have consciousness and vision, and let us consider a single one of them. Its abode is in the blood of somebody, — of you, let us say; and its life is very exciting for it because it never knows what its path will be. Sometimes it is

driven into one of your fingers, again into one of your toes; it may be busy on a little scratch well covered up, or it may suddenly have to do battle with a tetanus bacillus. Ask a leucocyte what it knows of life and it might well answer that it is a continuous problem; it would tell you all sorts of interesting things about your interior — which is its whole world — but it could not tell anything about you. Even so simple a detail as that, for instance, you do not like parsnips, could not occur to this leucocyte, — because you do not eat them, and so it has no experience with parsnips. Really, the leucocytes with consciousness, which I am imagining, are very like us; they are in their world and we are in ours. And we may be very like them: parts of a Great Intelligence as much beyond us as we are beyond the leucocytes which form parts of us.

Humanity has always been speculating about this Greater Intelligence, and yet speculation has always been discouraged on the ground that the matter is all settled. This conservatism is what gives us such amazing dicta as the Westminster Shorter Catechism and the Thirty-nine Articles. The usual human concept of the Greater Intelligence is as of one apart from us and appearing in all manifestations of power. It has been proposed that we may come into sight and communication with it after death; and the fear of it, described as the beginning of wisdom, has also been used to make us do strange things in accordance with traditions and myths, older than history.

Even analogy will only help us occasionally here, and otherwise we have nothing to guide us in these vaster regions but the imagination. And yet, if we can imagine some relation between human beings and a possible Greater Intelligence, a relation which does not seem false or impossible, we may be

taking steps in advance. If we imagine this and imagine that and then something else, it may be that some day somebody will imagine a working hypothesis which does not seem to offend against the truth.

Now, suppose the working hypothesis should involve the conception of human beings as minute particles of the Greater Intelligence, citing the analogy of the leucocytes or any other swarm of microscopic units. We need not then restrict ourselves to their reactions in the human body. We are different, are differently constructed, and this remarkable quality of consciousness is at all events far greater in the human being than it is, for instance, in a leucocyte. Without doubt it reaches further. Nor need we restrict the Greater Intelligence to our own limitations. We are not conscious of our blood corpuscles, but that is no reason why the Greater Intelligence may not be conscious of us. We know, as we have said, that if our white blood corpuscles are weak, inefficient, or sick, we languish, and that our welfare requires that they be in health. So, if we consider collective humanity and observe that it advances in knowledge, in understanding, in order, and in righteousness, we may then feel that it is well with the Greater Intelligence of which we are a part. But if we live in idleness and waste and hatred and cruelty and malice, and cause misery and degradation, it would seem that we are offending and injuring the Greater Intelligence, the God of all of us. This makes the Greater Intelligence in a way dependent upon us, so that it loses health and welfare and power when we undermine the health and welfare of one another.

Sometime when we know more than we do now, there may be available a working hypothesis along these lines and in accord with familiar facts. It is interesting to speculate upon what the

results may be. Hebrew poetry has given us a tradition and a conception of a deity apart from ourselves and pregnant with the greatest conceivable measure of power. The Christian, Jewish, and Mohammedan peoples worship a kinetic divinity that rules the stars and the uttermost heavens, the nebulae as well as the sun and its planets, including the earth. The thought of any other Greater Intelligence is condemned. Beginning with a tribal deity

inspired by selfishness, lust, and wrath, humanity has magnified its conception of its god until it has driven him from the earth and projected him through the ether into a million other worlds. It may be that we shall be guided back again to a god of all men and women, exercising vast powers of the spirit when in health and when its particles are doing their work as they should, but losing power to lead or guide if mankind is wayward and corrupt.

## NOTHING

BY ZEPHINE HUMPHREY

THIS is not going to be an easy story to write. Its theme is precisely that which I have chosen for my title; and naturally its positive significance is not obvious. But I must somehow get the thing into words. The spiritual value which I found in the experience may come home to some reader. At any rate, it is good for us all to stop now and then and challenge the conventional standards of our lives.

To begin with, I presume that there are few sympathetic students of humanity who will not agree with me that the strain of mysticism which sometimes appears in the New England character is one of the most interesting and touching of all the manifestations of our human nature. It is so unexpected! The delicate pearl in the rough oyster is not more apparently incongruous, rarer, or more priceless. Nay, it is more than that. The development is so impossible as to be always a miracle, freshly wrought by the finger of God.

There are all sorts of elements in it which do not appear in other kinds of mysticism: humor (that unfailing New England salt!), reserve, and a paradoxical mixture of independence and deference. It knows how inexplicable it must seem to its environment, how it must fret its oyster; so it effaces itself as much as possible. But it yields not one jot of its integrity. It holds a hidden, solitary place apart — like a rare orchid in the woods, like a hermit thrush. Even to those who love it, it will not lightly or often reveal itself. But when it does — well, I would take a weary, barefoot pilgrimage for the sake of the experience which I had last summer. And here I may as well begin my narrative.

I sat behind her in the little country church; and when I had studied her profile for a few moments, I was glad of a chance to rise and sing the Doxology. She was a woman of fifty-odd, a typi-

cal Vermonter, with the angular frame and features peculiar to her class. Her mouth was large, her cheek-bones were high; her thin, dark hair, streaked with gray, was drawn smoothly down behind her ears. But her expression! — that gave her away. Not flagrantly, of course. To discover her one had to be temperamentally on the watch for her. Apparently, like all the rest of us, she was looking at the flowers before the pulpit; but I was sure that her wide blue eyes were really intent on something behind and beyond. Her mouth brooded, her forehead dreamed, her whole face pondered grave and delectable matters. I am afraid that I did not hear much of the sermon that morning.

When church was over, I followed her out, and waited to see in what direction she turned her homeward steps. Then I made up my mind to devote the next week to taking walks in that same direction. The minister's wife saw me looking after her, and approached me with a smile which I understood. She was about to say, 'That is one of our native oddities, a real character. I see that she interests you. Shall I take you to see her? You will find her a curious and amusing study.' But I headed her off by letting the wind blow my handkerchief away. Nobody should tell me anything about my mystic — not even what her name was, or where she lived!

I was fully prepared not to find her for several days. I went forth in quest of her in the spirit in which I always start out to find a hermit thrush — ready to be disappointed, to wait, humbly aware that the best rewards demand and deserve patience. But she was not so securely hidden as the thrush. Her little house gave her away to my seeking, as her expression, the day before, had given her away to my sympathy.

It was just the house for her: low and white, under a big tree, on the side of a

brook-threaded hill, a little apart from the village. I recognized it the instant I saw it; and when I had read the name — 'Hesper Sherwood' — on the mailbox by the side of the road, I confidently turned in at the gate.

She was working in her garden, clad in a blue-checked gingham apron and a blue sunbonnet. When she heard my footsteps, she looked up slowly, turning in my direction; and, for the first time, I saw her full face.

It was even better than her profile. Oh! when human features can be moulded to such quietness and confidence, what an inexplicable pity it is that they ever learn the trick of fretfulness! In Hesper Sherwood, humanity for once looked like a child of God.

I was not sure at first that she saw me distinctly. Perhaps the sun dazzled her shaded eyes. Her expectant expression held itself poised a little uncertainly, as if she were doubtful of the exact requirements of the situation. But when I said something — commonplace enough and yet heartfelt — about the beauty of the view from her gate, her face lighted and she came forward.

'It's better from the house,' she said, shyly, yet eagerly. 'Won't you come up and see?'

It was indeed as fair a prospect as a threshold ever opened up upon. Close at hand was the green hillside, dropping down to the smiling summer valley; and beyond were the mountains, big and blue, with their heads in the brilliant sky and with cloud-shadows trailing slowly over them. Directly across the way, they were massive; in the distance, where the valley opened out to the south, they were hazy and tender. One of them loomed above the little house, and held it in its hand. Everywhere, they were commanding presences; and it was clear that the house had taken up its position wholly on their account.

Plain enough in itself it was, that house. Its three small rooms were meagrely furnished; and its windows were curtainless, inviting the eyes beyond themselves. It was utterly restful. It made me want to go home and burn up half the things I possess. Later, as I came to know it and its owner better, I understood what perfect counterparts they were. She, too, invited the gaze beyond herself.

It is, of course, not my intention to trace the development of our friendship. Though we trusted each other from the beginning, we took the whole summer to feel our way into each other's lives. It was a beautiful experience. I would not have hurried it. But now I want to proceed at once to the conversation in which she finally told me explicitly what had not happened to her. It was but the definite statement of what I had known all along: that here was a life which God had permitted Himself the luxury of keeping apart for his own delectation.

We were sitting out on the front steps, in the face of the mountains and valley; and we had said nothing for a long time. Our silence had brought us so close that when she began to speak, my ear ignored the uttered words and I felt as if my thoughts were reading hers.

'It's queer about folks' lives, is n't it?' she said thoughtfully — though I am not sure that she was any more aware of her lips than I was of my ears. 'How they follow one line; how the same things keep happening to them, over and over. I suppose it's what people call Fate. There's no getting away from it.'

'Take my brother Silas. As a boy, he was always making the luckiest trades; could n't seem to help it. Then when he married and moved to his new farm, he began to get rich; and now he couldn't stop his money if he wanted to. He must be worth fifteen thousand dollars.

'Take my sister Persis. She's had eleven children.

'Take my uncle Rufus. He's been around the world three times, and is just starting again.

'Take —'

She paused and hesitated.

'You,' I supplied softly.

'Well, yes, take me.' She turned and flashed a sudden smile at me. 'I've always wanted everything, and I've had — nothing.'

She spoke the word as if it were the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow.

'It took me a long time to understand,' she went on quietly, as I made no comment. 'I suppose that was natural. I was young; and I had never happened to hear of a case like mine. At first, I thought that, just because I wanted a thing, I was bound to have it. There was my mother.'

Again she paused, and a tender, glowing light appeared in her face, like the quickening of a latent fire. It was eloquent of all sorts of passionate, youthful, eager things.

'I guess I worshiped my mother,' she submitted simply. 'Maybe you think that, anyway, I had her. But, no, I had n't. She liked me well enough. Mothers do. But we had a big family, and we lived in a big house, and she was very busy. It bothered her to have me get in her way with my huggings and kissings. Why in the world could n't I wait until bedtime? Poor mother! She never did seem to know what to make of my devotion. People don't like to be loved too well; it embarrasses them.'

'She died when I was fourteen. And I thought I'd die too.'

There was no shadow on Hesper's face as she remembered her young, far-away anguish; rather, there was a strange deepening of peace. But she was silent for two or three minutes; and I noticed that she put out her hand and

caressed an old-fashioned, crocheted tidy that lay on the arm of a chair which she had brought out on the porch. When she resumed her story, she spoke somewhat more rapidly.

'I was sick a long time. If I had n't been, I think I might have gone crazy. But pain took my attention, and weakness made me sleep a good deal; and when I came to get up again, I was quieter. I spent lots of time in the fields and woods. I had always loved them, and now they seemed to help me more than anything else. There was something about them so big that it was willing to let me love it as much as I wanted to. That was comforting. When I was in the woods, I felt as if I had hold of an endless thread. You know how it is?'

She appealed to me.

'Indeed, yes!' I answered her. And I quoted William Blake, —

'Only wind it into a ball, —  
It will lead you in at heaven's gate,  
Built in Jerusalem's wall.'

She nodded soberly, yet glowingly, and pondered the words for a moment. Then, 'That's very good,' she said. 'Please say it again.'

'Well, by and by,' she continued, touching her finger as if she were half unconsciously enumerating the points of a discourse, — there was something indescribably simple and downright in her manner of unfolding her experience, — 'by and by, somebody gave me a card to the village library, and I began to read. Of course I had always gone to school, but the pieces in the readers did n't interest me particularly, and I had n't followed them up. A reader is n't a book, anyway; it's a crazy quilt. I guess I shan't ever forget that summer. I could n't do anything but read. I read stories and poems and books about travel and history and peoples' lives. I had a hiding place up in the woods, where I used to

go and stay for hours, sometimes whole days. My older sister could n't get anything out of me in the way of housework. It was wonderful.' Her voice rose a little, and something of the old exultation came flooding back into her face. 'Is n't it silly to talk of books as if they were just print and paper, when they are really stars and seas and cities and pictures and people and everything! There was nothing my books did n't give me that summer; and yet, on the other hand, there was nothing they did n't make me want. I wanted to travel, to go everywhere, to see and hear everything; above all, by way of a beginning, I wanted to go to school.'

'I was always an impatient child; and it did seem as if I could n't wait till autumn, when the schools opened. There's a good school at Fieldsborough, over the mountain. I coaxed my father to let me go there; and, after a while, he consented. On the day he wrote to enter my name, I ran up in the woods and lay in a bed of ferns and cried for joy. I hugged every tree that came in my way. I tried to hug the brook. Dear me!' Again she broke off, and the light which had begun to burn in her eyes softened into a smile. 'That's the way I was then. I was so hot-hearted. I did n't understand.'

'But you went?' I inquired, my sympathetic eagerness suddenly breaking bounds. It seemed to me that I could not stand it if she had been disappointed. 'Oh! why not?' My voice faltered, for she shook her head.

'My eyes,' she said briefly. 'They had always bothered me; and, before he let me go to school, father had them examined by a city doctor who was boarding in the village. He said I'd surely be blind some day; and that, of course, the more books I read, the sooner the end would come.'

She spoke as if she referred to the wearing out of an umbrella or a pair of



shoes; and, fortunately for us both, my mistress kept me dumb.

'It was pretty hard at first — a real blow. But I was sixteen years old, and I had suffered once. Then, too, I thought I had to make a choice, and I needed all my wits about me. So I held on to myself, and went off to the woods to think. Should I go to school, or should I keep my eyes as long as I could? As soon as I had put my mind to it, however, I found that there was n't any real question there. Of course I'd got to keep my eyes, and the school must go. There were all sorts of reasons. I wanted to see the woods and mountains as long as possible. I didn't want to become dependent on any one. My memory was n't very good; and I knew, most likely, if I went to school and stuffed my mind full that year, I'd soon forget everything, and there I'd be — worse off than ever. So I gave over thinking about it, and just lay in the ferns all the afternoon.

'Maybe you'll hardly believe me when I tell you that I was happy that day. I don't know what it was. Something moved in the treetops and in the shadows. I watched it closely; and, by and by, when I was just on the point of seeing it, I realized that both my eyes were closed. If I had n't been so surprised by that discovery and so taken up with wondering how I had happened to shut my eyes without knowing it, I believe I'd have seen —'

Her voice trailed off into silence; and I presently found myself wondering if she had left that sentence unfinished also without knowing it.

'My father died the next year,' she continued, after a few thoughtful minutes, 'and my sister married, and I came to live in this little house. I had it fixed over to suit me, so that it was as simple and convenient as possible; and I set myself to learn it by heart. I did a lot of my housework after dark.

Inside a year, I was so independent that I knew I need never worry about having to get anybody to help me. By taking plenty of time, I managed to learn some books by heart too; and I found it was much more interesting to sit and think about one paragraph for an hour than to read twenty pages. Even a few words are enough. Take, "Be still, and know that I am God"; or, "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace." There's no end to those sentences.

'Well,' — She touched her third finger, and then, for the first time, she came to a full pause, as if she were not sure about going on. Her face grew shy and reserved and reluctant. I looked away, and not for anything would I have urged her further confidence. But she went on presently. She had committed herself to the stream of this confession, and she would not refuse to be carried by it wherever it might wind. 'After a while I had a lover. He was a man from the city, and I met him in the woods. We were never introduced; and, for a long time, I did n't know anything about him — except that I loved him and he loved me. We could n't help it, for we felt the same way about the woods. I had never known any one like him before, and never expected to because I'm so different from most folks. He made me understand how lonely it is to be different. I — we —'

But, after all, she could not dwell on this experience, and I did not want her to. The poignant beauty of the relation was already sufficiently apparent to my imagination.

'One day he told me that he had a wife at home,' she concluded; 'and I never saw him again. I think it was then that I really knew and understood.'

Knew what? Understood what? She had an air of having said all that was necessary, of having come to the end of

her story; and I shrank from putting any crude questions to her. But it seemed to me that, if she did not tell me something more of her secret, I should just miss the most significant revelation I had ever glimpsed. Perhaps she read my suspense. At any rate, she said presently, —

‘It was very simple. If it had n’t been, I could n’t have understood it; for I was never a good hand at trying to reason things out. It was just that I was n’t ever to have anything I wanted. When I once knew and accepted that, I felt as if I’d slipped out into a great, wide, quiet sea.’

This was, to her own mind, so definitely the end of her narrative that, after sitting a moment in silence, she half rose as if to go into the house and attend to some domestic task. But I put out my hand and held her apron’s hem.

‘You mean —’ I stammered.

Really, she must tell me a little more!

A look of perplexity, almost of distress, came into her tranquil face, and she shook her head.

‘I told you I was no hand at working things out,’ she said. ‘It’s better just to know.’

‘Please!’ I insisted.

It was crass in me; but I felt that something as precious as life itself depended on my grasping the full significance of this story.

Gently, but very resolutely, she stooped and released her apron from my clutch.

‘I’ve some bread in the oven,’ she said, and disappeared.

She was gone so long that I had time to do what I would with the fragments of the story which she had so non-committally delivered to me. Since analysis was my way, I should have full scope for it. I sat with my head in my hands, my elbows on my knees. The sunset deepened and glowed around me, but I paid no attention to it. The

cloudy abstraction which hovered before my inner vision, and let me grasp here a fringe, there a fold, was all-absorbing to me.

Souls that want greatly, like Hesper, are doomed to failure or disappointment. No earthly having can possibly satisfy them. For what they really want is simply God, and earth represents Him very imperfectly. Hesper had not been happy with the thing she had come nearest having — her mother. Would she have been happy with her lover? Would he have let her love him ‘too well’? Books and education and travel are all finite and fragmentary means to an end which never arrives. Only adventurous spirits can escape the torment in them. And, with all her eagerness, Hesper was not adventurous. She was too earnest and humble, she was too direct. Fate had been good to her; and, in giving her nothing, had really given her everything. Everything: that was God. Well, her story had not once referred to Him, but it had been as instinct with Him as a star with light. It was He who had beckoned and lured her by lurking in her three definite interests, and then had shattered them before her in order that she might find Him. She had Him fast at last, and He had her. There was no mistaking the heavenly surrender of her face. I was awed with the apprehension of the passionate seeking and finding between a human soul and its Maker. Did she recognize and acknowledge the situation? Or, here again, did she prefer a blind certainty?

Blind! The word had dogged me for several weeks, but I had evaded it. Now, when it suddenly confronted me, I was all but staggered by it. I think I groaned slightly; I know I pressed my hand closely over my eyes. Then my own action admonished me. Here was I, deliberately shutting myself away from the sight of the outer world in or-

der that I might hold and marshal my thoughts in the presence of reality. The hills and sky are distracting; the whole flying glory of creation is a perpetual challenge and disturbance to the meditative spirit. How supremely excellent it would be if one could only look long and hard and adoringly enough at it to see through it once; and then never see it again, for the rapt contemplation of That which lies behind!

I had come to this point in my reverie when Hesper softly returned and stood in the doorway behind me. I looked up at her. She returned my smile, but I thought that her eyes did not quite fix me. Neither did she glance at the sky when I commented on the beauty of the sunset — though she assented to the comment convincingly. As she sat down beside me, her hands and feet made a deft groping. I said

nothing; and I have never known whether she or any one else knew that she was blind.

The minister's wife waylaid me, as I passed her house that evening on my way back to my room.

'You've been to see Hesper Sherwood again?' she remarked, with a righteous, tolerant air of ignoring a slight. 'I'm so glad! Her life is so empty that any little attention means riches to her.'

'Empty!'

The expostulation was a mistake, but I really could not help it.

'I have never known such a brimming life,' I added, still more foolishly.

The minister's wife stared at me.

'Why, she has nothing at all,' she said.

'Precisely!' I commented, and went on my way.

## THE ENGLISH SIDE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION

BY ABRAHAM FLEXNER

### I

THE virtues and defects of the English scheme of medical education are primarily of professional importance; but, altogether apart from its peculiar value in medical instruction, its most characteristic feature is of profound general educational significance. A knowledge of the English side of medical education is therefore of general as well as special educational interest.

The English medical school is an outgrowth of the English hospital, for it began when the English medical student attached himself to a master whom

he followed through the wards. Such additional instruction as the student required — instruction, for example, in anatomy and pharmacy — he obtained in schools that grew up outside the hospital, but in close relation to it. In course of time, the separate masters, coming together, formed a 'faculty,' and their apprentices, being pooled, formed a student body. Thereupon the so-called 'anatomical schools' became part of the hospital schools. But these developments did not affect the character of medical training: in its first stage it was essentially and simply a hospital apprenticeship.

A second phase belonged to the latter part of the nineteenth century. A group of fundamental sciences had developed out of medicine or in close proximity to it, — pathology, physiology, biology, chemistry, etc.; they became parts of the hospital medical school, with such limitations as the organization, resources and spirit of the school enforced. The organization in question consisted of practicing hospital physicians; the resources were merely student fees; the spirit was intensely and immediately practical, as is necessarily the way with an apprenticeship. Under these circumstances, the so-called laboratory subjects gradually edged their way into busy hospital schools. Their teaching was in the first place entrusted to certain members of the hospital staff, — usually the younger members, who still had a certain amount of leisure time. This arrangement soon proved unsatisfactory, for it became evident that, even though the laboratory sciences in a medical school are in the first instance important because they have a bearing on clinical problems, nevertheless, so long as they are taught in a grudging instrumental spirit, they largely fail of even their practical purpose. They cannot, in a word, be effectively taught, except in so far as they are freely cultivated. For this reason, much of the teaching of the underlying sciences was in time differentiated and committed to a group of full-time teachers. Meanwhile, the clinical branches continued to be taught as before. The more intelligent clinicians absorbed and utilized the current scientific learning, assimilating it the more rapidly as its clinical value was demonstrated by successive triumphs; the apprentice in the wards thus enjoyed the opportunity of witnessing increasingly intelligent clinical methods.

From the preceding account it is ob-

vious that the English medical school is to-day in essence a hospital apprenticeship school modified by the addition of the underlying sciences, independently taught and cultivated. Legally, many of them have some sort of university relationship: in London, for example, the schools are affiliated with London University, that is, they are known as 'schools' of the university. Each of the schools, however, is practically independent in the management of its internal affairs. The university connection is a mere matter of form. In the provinces the schools appear to be departments of the developing provincial universities; but only the laboratory subjects form properly organized university departments conducted by the university authorities, as are the departments of mathematics, Greek, and Latin. Of the clinical work, the universities have only nominal control. The schools are therefore nowhere of full-fledged university character.

In a recent discussion of the German side of medical education in the pages of the *Atlantic Monthly*,<sup>1</sup> I called attention to what seemed to me its characteristic features — the high minimum level of organization and equipment of the medical schools; the admirable secondary school training exacted of every medical student; and the genuinely university quality of the entire faculty. A word as to each of these points. Despite the fact that German medical departments vary in extensiveness and completeness, all without exception possess adequate facilities — laboratory and clinical. The preliminary education of an overwhelming majority of the student body has been along classical rather than modern lines, and this without any especial adaptation to the demands of medical training; yet it has at least been a serious education, of uniformly high quality and calculated

<sup>1</sup> November, 1913.

to develop the student's ability to put forth severe effort and to endure hard work.

Finally, the medical faculty of every university has been assembled on the basis of scientific eminence. The Germans are not without certain prejudices which now and then lead them to pass over the most highly deserving individual in favor of one somewhat less able or distinguished. But even in these instances, the appointment when made will prove to be a creditable one, while, as a rule, the competition of universities insures appointments on the basis of sheer scientific performance and promise. The practicing profession and the teaching profession are sharply distinguished from each other; and members of the latter are called from one university to another, as vacancies occur. In these respects laboratory and clinical teachers are on the same footing. They represent precisely the same university type of activity and ideal. If the professor of physiology is a productive scientist who has fought his way up from one university to another on the basis of achievement, so has the professor of medicine, so has the professor of surgery. To the points just touched on — the excellent facilities, a trained student body, a genuine university professoriat — the German medical school owes its character and its eminence.

In all these respects, English medical education fares badly in comparison. In the first place, the English facilities are inferior. The English medical school possesses a hospital, to be sure; as we have seen, the medical school grew out of the hospital. And as a rule, the hospital and its outpatient departments contain material enough for the purposes of instruction. But in other respects the hospital is far from satisfying modern standards. The material has as yet been only crudely

differentiated. Medicine, surgery, and obstetrics are recognized as separate divisions; but there has been little intensive specialization within these broad fields. In consequence, research suffers from the lack of concentrated and specialized material.

Moreover, while the English hospital is a comfortable and attractive place in which to lodge the sick, it lacks the laboratory equipment and staff needed for the critical study of disease. Practical appliances — usually devised and tried elsewhere — are, indeed, in process of introduction: X-ray machines, electric baths, and similar contrivances are now fairly common. But research laboratories with competent assistants and regular support are well-nigh unknown.

Of the underlying sciences, — anatomy, physiology, pathology, and the like — all excellently well developed in Germany and particularly from the standpoint of research, only physiology is as a rule creditably represented in the English hospital school. The arrangements for the teaching of anatomy suffice in general only for the elementary instruction actually required. Pathology is taught from the gross and descriptive points of view; its material comes mainly from the operating room and museum; on the experimental side there has been, in the medical school, no activity. Modern pharmacology is almost unrecognized. Physiology alone has been more liberally cultivated. A vigorous, though comparatively recent development requires practical instruction in which the student actively participates, and independent activity on the part of the teaching force. With this exception, the somewhat meagre facilities and barren outlook of the medical sciences result in a mechanical, stereotyped, disciplinary type of teaching, scientifically uninspiring to both student and instructor.

## II

For these unsatisfactory conditions, the brief historical sketch above given furnishes an adequate explanation. The medical school has been a hospital apprenticeship. Whatever has been added to that has had to justify itself on practical grounds. Anatomy, physiology, chemistry, and pathology have been utilized because they bear on clinical problems and just so far as they bear on clinical problems. There has been — for the most part — no time, money, or inclination for their free and more or less irresponsible cultivation. Their development — always excepting physiology — has been stunted on this account, since science does not flourish where it is compelled at every step to justify itself by an immediately instrumental utility.

Again, the English student body is at once heterogeneous and not highly trained. Secondary education is in Great Britain still in an undeveloped condition. It is only within the last decade that local authorities have been constituted for the express purpose of establishing secondary schools in England, and that a special division of the Board of Education has been created to assist in giving financial support. While the secondary school situation is therefore now fairly on the road to effective organization, medical schools have up to this time, for the most part, made on their students only a slight educational demand. The English boy is still usually admitted to a medical school if he can produce a certificate showing successful examination in four subjects, three of them being languages: English, elementary Latin, and either French, German, Italian, or Greek. The fourth subject is mathematics, including arithmetic, elementary algebra, and a small amount of plane geometry. Of the Oxford or Cambridge medical stu-

dent much more is, of course, demanded for entrance; but even he goes to London for his clinical training, entering one of the hospital schools and sharing in the instruction designed to suit the undertrained boys just characterized. In preliminary training the English students are therefore much less homogeneous and much less competent than the German.

Finally, the school and hospital staff is from the educational standpoint inferior. The historic evolution must again be considered. The hospital staff is the school staff. The conditions of hospital service have therefore limited the possibilities of scientific and educational development. Now the hospitals were in the first instance charities, to which the practicing medical profession willingly rendered such voluntary service as the current conduct of the institution required. While gifted individuals from time to time utilized their hospital opportunities in order to prosecute scientific inquiry, such inquiry was incidental and individual. It was never the purpose of the voluntary hospital to promote medical science; its sole object was to relieve distress. A tradition actually unfavorable to scientific endeavor has in the end been created. Promotion by seniority generally prevails. Young men who can afford to wait — and, therefore, as a rule those only — attach themselves to the hospital service, fairly certain that by assiduous attention to routine they will ultimately succeed to the principal posts. Step by step, as they rise in rank, their association with the prominent physicians holding the chief appointments leads to an increase in private practice which is apt to be increasingly fatal to scientific ideals. Moreover, the hospitals all inbreed. The lower posts are filled with recent graduates, who succeed almost automatically to the leading positions.



Men are rarely called from one hospital to another, even in the same town. The incentive which 'calling' offers to the German scientist is therefore almost entirely lacking. The worldly, as well as the professional and scientific, future of the German clinician depends in the first instance on his scientific productivity, for he will rise either in the service of his own university or in the service of some other university only if he has successful performance to his credit. The English medical man has no such spur. Once started on the hospital ladder, he is destined to rise if he is assiduous in following his chief and reasonably faithful in the performance of his routine duties. Scientific renown will not of course hurt him, but it is rare and therefore by no means indispensable. Do what he will, only consummate ability will ever be summoned from one hospital service to the other, and then only under highly exceptional circumstances.

Between the practicing and teaching clinical profession there is in England no distinction at all, except in so far as the men attached to English hospitals are for the most part consultants rather than general family practitioners. It follows, therefore, that the atmosphere of the English medical school is the atmosphere of English medical and surgical practice. It is not an atmosphere distinguished by the presence of ideas. A certain contempt for pure science or scientific medicine is even observable. One is told that the English are practical people; that it is the business of the doctor to prescribe for his patients; that the practical bearings of scientific inquiry are too often remote from the current needs of the busy practitioner. Demonstrated, tangible improvements are indeed taken up, but these have usually been demonstrated somewhere else. Facilities are not furnished for the purpose of scientific in-

vestigation. There is lack of cordiality in the relationship between the staff physicians and the chemists and physiologists who have latterly been added to the medical school staff. Whereas the German university clinic is alive with ideas and with the spirit of inquiry, the English hospital is on this side casual and incidental, precisely as is the practicing profession of the country.

### III

Thus far the contrast is sufficiently to the disadvantage of the English system. Nevertheless, a highly important counter-consideration has now to be taken into account. The German medical faculty began in a university that had been for centuries a lecturing faculty devoted to theoretical exposition. The lecture method, the method of philosophical presentation and elaboration, prevailed in the medical faculty as in other faculties — law, for example, or theology. In consequence, during this entire period, medical thought was completely dominated by metaphysics, and medical education in the university had no contact with disease in the concrete. As recently as 1805, the medical students at Tübingen preferred theoretical instruction to interrogation in the presence of patients, and it is apologetically recommended that at least in the matter of obstetrics the young doctor should have seen one birth before undertaking a case where two lives are at stake. Almost half a century later Helmholtz, despite his inborn experimental turn, publicly expounded, upon the occasion of his graduation as military surgeon, the operation of tumors, although he had never seen a tumor operated on.

With the development of the laboratory sciences in the university, German medicine shook off the metaphysical incubus, and in the laboratories

and hospital came into close and immediately fruitful contact with disease and its manifestations in the concrete. Medicine had previously been damaged by its university character, because the university connection had meant lack of contact with reality; now it was enormously and very rapidly benefited, because that connection meant inspiring ideals, ample facilities, and the stimulus of allied sciences, many of which bore upon clinical problems. The transformation of the lecturing and expounding mediæval university into the modern critical, investigating university, with its seminars, institutes, laboratories, and clinics, is indeed an astounding phenomenon. No other faculty has profited so much by the evolution as the medical faculty. No other faculty had so far to go; no other faculty ramifies so widely and so intricately. It is hardly too much to say that almost every advance in physical, chemical, and biological science may have consequences for medicine. The complete inclusion of medicine in the university throughout the modern scientific period made certain that the ideals with which science was working and the results obtained would immediately affect medicine and the medical sciences. All this is just as true of the clinical as of the laboratory branches. The hospital is a university institute, as favorable as the laboratory branches to the inception and cultivation of new ideas; for the clinical professor in Germany is a university professor in the full sense of the term, enjoying all the dignities attached to a university professorship and subject to precisely the same standards of scientific and medical achievement.

In one crucially important respect, however, medical teaching in Germany has failed to modernize. The German undergraduate student of medicine is still taught largely by lectures, miti-

gated though they are by demonstrations and exhibits at which he gazes from his seat in the amphitheatre. Special courses more concrete and individual in character are indeed offered; but the lecture course, the traditional exercise of the mediæval university, is still the backbone, and furnishes largely the bulk of the instruction. Even in the hospital, the student is a mere on-looker. He is not freely admitted to the bedside of the patient. A few devices have been tried by way of remedying the difficulty, but they have entirely failed. Not until the graduated doctor becomes a hospital assistant does he obtain the close and constant opportunity to observe disease in its entire course which should have been his throughout his clinical education.

It is precisely here that the counter consideration to which I called attention enters; precisely at this point — and it is a point of priceless value — the comparison is all in favor of the English method. I have said that the English medical school began when staff physicians were accompanied on their hospital rounds by the few students who had personally attached themselves to them. The student, therefore, from the first, saw the patient at the bedside. He observed his master at work; he was permitted to examine the patient, to confirm or to disprove his master's observations, and, subject to his master's control, to go through all the motions involved in the practice of medicine. His training was vivid, real, and concrete from the start. Disease was not to him merely a verbal account of disordered function. He observed the disordered function as he watched and touched the patient before him. From the standpoint of training, the English medical schools have, from the start, thus been in full possession of the one absolutely and really indispensable thing.

Attendance upon a preceptor changed in time, as we have remarked, to membership in a more or less organized hospital school. Laboratories were added for teaching the underlying sciences. But these developments have in no wise altered the character of English medical education. The privileges and opportunities of the students have been in no wise abridged. The medical student has remained thoroughly at home in the wards of the hospital. His education has continued to be an apprenticeship—an apprenticeship which has lost none of its advantages even though it has been more and more systematized in recent years.

In this matter the English hospital authorities have shown the greatest wisdom and liberality. They have never displayed any inclination to meddle with educational matters, nor have they attempted, by fussy regulations, to interfere with sound educational procedure. Privileges are heartily, not grudgingly, extended. Indeed, the hospitals have largely profited by their connection with medical education. The student body, serving as clinical clerks, are utilized as important aids in the care of the sick. The hospital does not feel that it is conferring a favor, for it is getting a valuable *quid pro quo*, and thus, through a fortunate arrangement, all parties are equally benefited—the patient, the hospital administration, the medical staff, and the medical student.

The clinical clerkship, above mentioned, is worthy of more extended notice, not only because it is the backbone of English clinical education, but because it is the only effective method of clinical education ever devised. After approximately a year's preliminary training in anatomy, chemistry, and physiology, the student enters the hospital, where he is first taught to notice and interpret the ordinary phys-

ical signs, and to make case records. Even before this course in diagnosis is completed, 'clerking' begins. Small groups of students—six, for example, at the London Hospital—are assigned to a visiting physician and his assistant, who have—at this same hospital—a service of sixty beds. Cases are assigned to the students or clerks in rotation. Each clerk is required to make a complete history and description of each of his cases, including the requisite microscopical examinations. For these purposes he has free entry to the bedside. The students' notes, criticized and revised by a member of the staff, form permanent and essential parts of the case records. Ward rounds are made daily. The chief, his assistants, and his clerks, move almost noiselessly from cot to cot, conversing in low tones over the patient. At each bed the clerk in charge steps forward, reads his notes, proposes his diagnosis and suggests a line of procedure. The chief questions, criticizes, offers alternatives, and stimulates a discussion in which presently the entire group is involved. The method fulfills every requirement of sound teaching: the student is at first hand familiar with the patient; he is compelled to observe and to think; he notes and reports progress from day to day; he sees his master on trial, as the procedure followed is either vindicated or discredited by developments. Meanwhile, the clerk can do no harm, for, free as he is to suggest, only the chief or his assistant can prescribe. The student has therefore every inducement to the active and responsible exercise of his faculties under conditions which thoroughly protect the patient against amateur medication.

Educationally speaking, nothing could be better. Modern medicine is indeed on these terms an ideal educational discipline. Society seeks intellects trained to observe, to frame ten-

tative hypotheses on the basis of observed phenomena, to try procedures suggested thereby, and to persist or to modify procedure, in the light of results thus obtained. This is the very essence of the scientific attack on any situation. Men trained to pursue this method — representing a combination or interplay of deductive and inductive logic — bring to bear upon a difficulty the most powerful known intellectual solvent. And this is precisely the method of scientific medicine. The modern physician must be an accurate and cautious observer; he must on this basis construct his tentative hypothesis or diagnosis, which suggests a definite therapeutic procedure; and the results vindicate his observation and judgment or send him back to the facts for fresh observation and reflection. The English clerkship furnishes an opportunity for a prolonged training along these lines; for the clerk systematically and persistently carries on his activities in this fashion. The only limitation lies here — that if his observation is inadequate or incorrect, or his proposed line of action injudicious, the criticism of his teacher rather than the suffering of the patient shows him his error.

On general educational grounds, the English method of teaching medicine, as was intimated at the outset, is notable from still another point of view. In two important respects clerkship is thus pedagogically suggestive. Professor Dewey has wisely remarked that in education 'the initiative lies' — or should lie — 'with the learner.' If training is to develop the pupil's ability to deal with situations, — if, in other words, education means not merely knowledge of, but capacity to deal with, — then the student's reactions must constitute the raw stuff out of which the teacher must develop orderly and effective mental processes.

That is, the learner must act before the teacher can react upon him. How much of education — modern as well as ancient — is discredited by this simple but significant criterion! 'Clerking' however, passes muster. In his studies of anatomy, physiology, pathology, and physical diagnosis, — themselves concretely pursued, — the student has presumably become familiar with normal conditions. Asked now to describe a patient, he takes the initiative in noting divergencies, and, again, in propounding his diagnosis and in suggesting a course of treatment. The teacher attacks; he defends. To begin by telling him, by pointing out, by interpreting, as the lecture or demonstration does, would be to deprive him of that initiative which is so highly educative. Learning is a game in which, whenever possible, the learner must move first. English medical education complies with this fundamental and general educational principle.

Again, educational processes gain enormously in their capacity to elicit and to direct energy by being real or quasi-real. Once more, if education aims to become a formative, stimulating and coördinating power in the individual's experience, — if it aims, not to communicate information or to imitate an approved model, but to provoke intelligent activities, — the genuineness of its appeal is a powerful factor. Artificial problems may leave the beginner cold, while a real difficulty may put him at once upon his mettle. Obviously, however, in the absence of acquired information or approved models, a genuine experience may be of little educational use. Hence, the other side — call it historical, theoretic, or what you will — cannot be neglected; we shall indeed in a moment see that neglect of pure and irresponsible intellectual pursuits deprives practical training of a large part of its inspirational

value. But, waiving this point, we may affirm that the reality of the means employed is of the highest educative value, and that, viewed from this standpoint, 'clerking' is an excellent example of sound method. The clinical clerk deals with genuinely sick people in real hospitals; and he deals with them in the same methodical way as the staff physician. Small wonder then that the English physician is ready, business-like, and practically master of the accepted technique of his profession.

Why then does so admirable a method produce, on the whole, unsatisfactory results? I have just intimated the answer to this question. The clinical teachers are practical men, rarely men of scientific vision or enthusiasm. They move contentedly within the area of the known; as the boundaries of knowledge are pushed further, their sphere of operations gradually widens; but they are not themselves, as a class, pioneers. The students possess certain excellent qualities; they are steady, earnest, reliable. But they lack — once more, of course, taken as a whole — intellectual discipline, maturity, and interest. When teachers of the type characterized undertake to train students of this kind, the instruction, while conscientious and thorough, is likely to be uniform, mechanical, cut and dried, uninspiring. Professor Ostwald has pointed out the educational significance of doing more than is required. Science cannot prosper on required courses; education in the higher sense lies always beyond the stipulated letter. The German university is fully impregnated with this spirit. Its pride is its appeal to voluntary activity; it has no use for men who do not seek opportunities to do what no one requires of them. The English medical school, however, offers little or no inducement or opportunity for that free, liberal, irresponsible exercise of the faculties without which neither

ideas nor faculties can sprout. Every school offers substantially the same courses; every student does substantially the same things, and spends no small amount of time and energy doing them over and over, so as to be examination-proof. Despite an excellent method the clinical atmosphere is depressing. An apprenticeship can, in a word, rise no higher than its source. Reality of environment, of appeal, of responsibility is not alone for most students educative in a high sense. The real appeal must take place in an atmosphere of ideas, of large interests, if anything more than humdrum efficiency at present levels is to result. At a time when practical coöperative training is coming into vogue, the importance of this point must not be overlooked.

#### IV

A scheme usually has the defects of its virtues. But in the case of German and English medical education this is not necessarily the case. The defects of both may be cured without sacrificing the peculiar virtues of either; nay more, the full value of both will be realized only when their present defects have been remedied. And, curiously enough, such remedy requires that the two methods be combined. It would be hard to find another instance in which different methods of pursuing an object really supplement each other as effectually as do German and English medical training: if the characteristic virtues of both are merged in a single method the result, as method, will be fairly beyond criticism.

Very explicit admission of the capital defect just pointed out has been made in the admirable report of the Royal Commission which, with Viscount Haldane as Chairman, has been planning a complete reorganization of university education in London. The



Commission attacked the entire problem from the standpoint that 'university teaching can be given only by men who are actively and systematically engaged in the advancement of knowledge in the subject they teach'; and it decided that, from this point of view, the clinical teaching of the London medical schools is not of university grade. It held that in a university 'the standard of the teachers in these [i.e. the clinical] subjects ought not to be different from that of university professors in other subjects, and it is therefore necessary to appoint and pay professors of the various branches of clinical medicine and surgery who will devote the greater part of their time to teaching and research.' This recommendation is frankly intended to introduce the German university conception into English medical education. But the Commission appreciates fully the value of clinical clerking and does not intend either to surrender or curtail it. 'All the evidence we have received points to the necessity of continuing the distinctly English method of clinical teaching. Under the German system this kind of instruction is not provided for, but this defect has no essential connection with the merits of that system, and could be corrected without interfering with the organization or spirit of the clinic. There is no inherent difficulty in combining the two systems of teaching.'<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion, a word may be added in reference to American conditions. Of medical education in America, it is difficult to speak in general terms, for it lacks the homogeneity characteristic of other countries. Whatever the respective merits or defects, medical ed-

<sup>1</sup> This valuable report is of general educational interest. It has been published as a Blue Book entitled *Final Report of the Commissioners on University Education in London*, and can be had for two shillings through any bookdealer from T. Fisher Unwin, London W.C. — THE AUTHOR.

ucation in Germany, France, or England is at any rate always the same sort of thing. This is not true of the United States, where medical education includes something of what is best and all of what is worst to be found among civilized nations. In respect to the really essential and characteristic excellences above pointed out, the American medical school is on the whole inferior to both German and English types: it has in general not yet attained the homogeneous university constitution characteristic of the German medical faculty; it too frequently lacks the clinical opportunity characteristic of the English hospital school. Exceptions are indeed beginning to be more frequent on both counts: something approaching university homogeneity may be occasionally affirmed; the clinical clerkship is becoming more frequent under more and more favorable conditions. The one point of real superiority in American conditions is, however, their greater plasticity. The Germans can hardly be imagined as deliberately and resolutely altering their scheme to meet criticism; the English will but slowly come to love and value university ideals in medical teaching. In America, however, a few well-managed schools have already contrived to unite what is best in German with what is best in English medical education. They have taken from Germany the productive ideal; they have taken from England the clinical clerkship. And convincing proof of their compatibility is already at hand.

Despite a heterogeneous and generally unsatisfactory situation, progress in other directions, indicative of the capacity for growth, can also be recorded. A very rapid reduction in the number of schools — a process that must, however, be carried much further — shows that general conditions tend to respond to intelligent and well-



informed criticism. Interesting efforts are making in a few of the good schools to devise more efficient teaching methods and to correlate more effectively laboratory and clinical work. These efforts are bound to tell in developing a more intelligent medical pedagogy. Moreover, the question has been raised as to what sort of preliminary education most naturally leads to the study of medicine, and an interesting and helpful experience is being well utilized to economize time and effort in the medical school.

Perhaps the most interesting innovation, however, undertakes to deal with the problem of the clinical teacher. In Germany, the clinical professor has long been of precisely the same type as the laboratory professor, a man devoted to teaching and research. Latterly, however, professional prosperity in large centres has tended to make him too worldly a figure, both education and research suffering in consequence. In England, the hospital consultant has rarely been anything else; and his educational and scientific importance have accordingly been limited. America, like England, has employed practicing physicians and surgeons as professors of medicine and surgery, with results generally unsatisfactory both to science and to education.

Three university schools of medicine — the Johns Hopkins at Baltimore, Washington University at St. Louis, and Yale — have now undertaken to reorganize the main clinical departments on the full-time or university basis. It is proposed that the incumbents of the posts in question and their necessary assistants — laboratory and clinical — become salaried members of the university staff, — like the teachers of anatomy and physiology; that they devote themselves wholly to the service of the hospital, education, and research; and that they withdraw altogether

from paid private practice. In order that their experience may be in no wise restricted, it is stipulated that absolutely no limitation is to be placed upon them: they remain entirely free to see any case that interests them, be the patient a pauper or a millionaire. The well-to-do and the wealthy cease, however, to be able to command the academic clinician's time and attention. He may and will see them, not because he is to be paid, but because it is worth while in the service of science, education, and humanity. Fees paid for such service are to go, not to the university clinician personally, but to the fund which supports the new system. It is gratifying — and perhaps not surprising — to find that academic posts on this basis have been already accepted by men in the prime of life at immense pecuniary sacrifices. The reasons are not far to seek: the scientific prosecution of medicine and surgery in America — as in England — has been backward for the lack, first, of adequate facilities; secondly, of conditions favorable to single-minded devotion. Latterly, the facilities have been provided in a few places; but the men have been distracted by the routine and the entanglements inseparably connected with practice. Meanwhile, the clinical branches make a powerful appeal from both scientific and humanitarian sides; and the full-time scheme just outlined represents an endeavor to pitch their cultivation on a high plane. The schools which are undertaking to introduce the full-time principle in clinical teaching are university departments which have appropriated from Germany the productive ideal, and from England the clinical clerkship. They work therefore under the most favorable conditions, and ought to train a generation of physicians who are at once skillful practitioners, competent investigators, and devoted humanitarians.

## THE BRITISH ADMIRALTY

BY ALFRED G. GARDINER

### I

THERE was no more significant incident in the crowded drama of the days that preceded the war than the strange scene, described by Sir W. E. Goschen, which took place at the final interview that the British Ambassador at Berlin had with Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg. No one who knows the German Chancellor would regard him as nervous and excitable. He gives the impression of an amiable man, and, what is even more rare among German statesmen, of a plain and candid man. Apart from Herr Posadowsky, I do not recall any public man of first position in Germany who seemed so free from the almost universal suggestion of secrecy that pervades the diplomatic tone of the country, or whose word one would so readily accept at its face value. That he should have so frankly revealed his mind about the action of England is not surprising, but that he should have revealed it with such an undisciplined burst of anger and astonishment is as remarkable as it is unusual. It was due in part no doubt to the failure of his attempts to preserve the peace; for that he was opposed to the war party then, as he had always been, is accepted as unquestionable by the best-informed opinion in England. But its extravagance was due to the gravity of the discovery. It was due to fear.

Germany had no doubt that, if she were opposed by Russia and France alone, her task and that of Austria would be assured of swift and easy ac-

complishment, and events have largely justified the calculation. But the intervention of England gravely altered the task.

It was not that Germany feared the armies of England. For them she had little respect, and her miscalculation on this point was to cost her dear: for it was the professional army of England, the best trained and the most experienced in Europe, that very largely broke the first shock of the German invasion and changed the current of the war.

But while Germany held the British army in little esteem, she had no illusions about the British navy. She knew that at sea her inferiority was almost as indisputable as her superiority on land, and that in the event of a swift decision not being attained, her exclusion from the sea and her consequent isolation from the world would seriously prejudice her chances. The intervention of England in fact made the certainty much less certain, and the completeness of the victory much less assured.

The restraint upon her powers of offense which the British naval superiority involved had occupied the mind of Germany for twenty years. Naval supremacy had never come within the scope of Bismarck's ambitions. His purpose was to dominate the Continent, not the extra-European world, and for this purpose he relied upon the sword. He recognized the advantage which the French navy gave to the French in 1870, especially in connection with the sup-

ply of horses from England, but that advantage he dismissed with a phrase: 'I will deal with the French navy at Paris.' To the end he remained indifferent to naval aspirations.

But the Kaiser's dream of 'a German world-empire and a Hohenzolern world-ruler' led him naturally to cultivate naval ambitions. The command of the sea was the key to the achievement of his object, and in 1898 at Stettin he made the momentous declaration that 'Our future lies upon the water.' In that declaration and its implications is the seed of the antagonism between England and Germany. Up to that time the German navy had been of negligible proportions, but thenceforth its extension became the dominant new fact in the life of Germany, and with the Naval Law of 1900 there emerged definitely the challenge to Great Britain's command of the seas. The new departure was conceived and carried out with characteristic method and thoroughness, and in Admiral von Tirpitz the Kaiser found an extremely capable instrument for his great adventure.

Von Tirpitz is not an original or imaginative mind, but he has the German industry and thoroughness. He did not initiate ideas; he followed a little slavishly, but with extraordinary efficiency, in the tradition of the country which he had set out, not merely to rival but to surpass. There is no contribution of great original quality that can be ascribed to him, and on the three capital developments of the past fifteen years — the invention of the all-big-gun ship, the submarine, and the development of the big gun — he was slow to respond. But though his conservative and uninspired temper was suspicious of new ideas and too imitative for an enterprising policy, his industry and mechanical capacity, coupled with the enthusiastic support of the Kaiser and ultimately of

the country, enabled him to make his challenge a reality. Behind all the external movements of the intervening years, it was the growth of the German navy which was the ultimate consideration in the relations of the two countries.

## II

For five years, however, the new cloud which was appearing in the sky of England evoked no action. The naval supremacy of the country had been so long an established fact in the national thought that it seemed almost a part of the eternal order of things. There had been, it is true, a naval sensation some twenty-five years ago, when the late Mr. W. T. Stead in the *Pall Mall Gazette* had temporarily shaken the country out of its sense of comfortable security. But the fear then was of France, and it was some time before the historic antagonism could be switched, in the public mind, into a new channel. But in 1905 the reply to the developing aims of Germany came in a sensational form with the emergence of the most remarkable man that the British navy has produced since Nelson.

It has been well said that Admiral Fisher is not so much a man as a natural element. He accommodates himself to no known type of character, and cuts with a sublime unconsciousness and indifference across all the conventions of men. He is like a bomb-shell in a parlor. It is fifty years since, as a lad, he was nominated for the navy by the last of Nelson's captains, and in the intervening years he had sailed every sea and filled every position open to him in the navy. And wherever he had been and whatever post he had occupied, 'Jacky' Fisher had been the centre of a new and energizing life. There was about him a freshness of mind and an audacity of temperament that made him irresistible. You might hate him

or distrust him, but you could not despise or ignore him. He brought with him everywhere a fearless directness of vision that made him the unceasing challenger of things as they were. Nothing was sacred to him except the memory of Nelson, whom he quoted as freely as he quoted the Bible, with which he garnished his tumultuous talk almost as abundantly as a revivalist preacher. 'What I object to in you,' said King Edward — who had a great affection for the breezy sailor — on one occasion, 'is that you are so violent.' 'Yes, sir,' came the reply, 'but the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent man takes it by storm.' I do not know whether this habit of scriptural quotation or his notorious love of sermons can be assumed to predicate exceptional piety. Certainly piety is not suggested by that sardonic, half-humorous, half-ruthless manner, and it must be admitted that his quotations have usually a bearing on the business of war. The comminatory Psalms make more appeal to him than the Book of Revelation.

It was Lord Ripon who first brought 'Radical Jack' into administrative prominence by making him Director of Naval Ordnance. He had already won reputation in the navy as a revolutionary thinker, a rebel against social traditions and accepted maxims. He had had no social backing himself, and he saw in the influences of society upon the navy the greatest danger to its efficiency, and he cared for nothing except efficiency. 'Buggins's turn,' he would say, 'is the curse of the navy. Buggins is first cousin of the Duke of Blankshire and brother-in-law of the Archbishop of Timbuctoo, and therefore he must have his turn though everybody knows he is a fool.' And with his love of paradox he would declare that 'Favoritism is the secret of success' — favoritism, that is, of capacity, of the

young man 'who has the rope round his neck,' of the man on the lower deck if he has the genius for the job.

Naturally all the Bugginses of the Navy were scared by the apparition of this tornado of a man. They saw all the comfortable tranquillity of the service threatened if he were allowed his head. They naturally believed that the ruts into which they had fallen were sacred. They were the ruts of the past. They had been made by the fathers of the British navy, and any interference with them was hardly distinguishable from blasphemy. Moreover, they were comfortable ruts. They saved one the trouble of thought and the inconvenience of change. It was true that the whole material of the navy had undergone a revolution, but that did not involve any revolution in thought or method. The navy had grown and did not need a surgical operation.

But though the hostility to Admiral Fisher was backed by formidable influences it failed to check his career. Once it seemed that he was beaten. He had become Second Sea Lord, but failing to get his way, he executed a retreat which his opponents hopefully regarded as equivalent to extinction. He assumed the sinecure at Portsmouth, and to his great joy, ran his own flag up on Nelson's old flagship. But so far from having finished he had not yet really begun. His full triumph came when in 1904 Lord Selborne urged him to return to the Admiralty as First Sea Lord. He laid down fourteen essentials as the conditions of his return, and when it was agreed that they should be adopted one at a time, his reply was, 'No, all at once. If I've got to kick people's shins, I want to kick them all together. I want them all to be too busy rubbing their own shins to turn on me when I'm occupied with other things.'

His return to Whitehall, master at last of the situation, was the signal for

such an outburst of anger among the conservative elements of the service as was without parallel. For three or four years the storm continued, and the press and the nation were divided into two factions, the one supporting Sir John Fisher and his policy, the other denouncing both with savage intensity.

The principal service opponent of the First Sea Lord was Lord Charles Beresford, who represented the social side of the navy and its conservative instincts. Lord Charles Beresford had spent his career in a divided loyalty between Parliament and the navy. He had the reputation of being a gallant officer, based largely upon the phrase, 'Well done, Condor,' — a message sent him by Admiral Seymour at the bombardment of Alexandria. In Parliament he was not taken very seriously; and it is probable that his opposition helped rather than hindered his opponent, for there was a general feeling in the public mind that if 'Charlie' Beresford was on one side, wisdom was very likely to be found on the other. But, of course, Lord Charles was only one of many. Practically all the old school, with exceptions like Sir Arthur K. Wilson, the most distinguished strategist in the navy, were opposed to the reformer, and from the writing-rooms of the service clubs there issued a torrent of envenomed criticism.

But Admiral Fisher paid no heed to the attacks and with his terrible broom made an astonishingly clean sweep of the service. There was not a department which was not transformed by his furious energy. It was as though the accumulated ideas of a lifetime were brought into play in one burst of revelation. Strategy, ships, gunnery, conditions of service, warehousing, all were brought within the orbit of his reforming energy. The fleet had been scattered all over the world according

to old traditions of strategy. He concentrated it in home waters on the principle that war, if it came, would be waged in the North Sea. On the same principle, and acting on Nelson's maxim, 'Your battle-ground should be your drill-ground,' he changed the theatre of manœuvres from the Mediterranean to the North Sea. He scrapped, amid the agonies of his opponents, no fewer than one hundred and fifty obsolete warships, on the ground that they would be of no use in war, and that the men whom they employed, and whose services were largely wasted, could be more profitably used in effective ships. He invented the expedient of the 'nucleus' crew and so enlarged the expansive capacity of the navy. He abolished the old storage system, under which there was an incredible waste of supplies, and by getting rid of multitudes of useless ships, concentrated on efficiency and solved without cost the pressing problem of accommodation for the navy. It would be impossible to indicate all the phases of this extraordinary revolution; but not the least important of them was the change which he wrought in the mind of the navy. His hand came down with merciless weight upon every incompetent, no matter what social prestige he could command; his eye roved round the service in search of any ability that was discoverable; and when he had discovered it, no criticism or custom could prevent him from giving it free play.

In his campaign he had many foes, but also stalwart friends, and among the last the most distinguished was Sir Arthur Wilson. As a strategist his reputation was secure, and no one held it in higher esteem than Admiral Fisher. But Sir Arthur was no administrator, and though he filled at various times certain administrative offices, he had no enthusiasm for the work and was



content to say 'Ditto to Fisher,' for whose administrative genius he had the deepest respect.

### III

But the event, of course, which made the reign of Sir John Fisher at the Admiralty memorable was the invention of the all-big-gun ship. That invention was the most sensational event in naval history. Lord Fisher himself claims nothing more for his share in it than that he was the first to put two and two together. 'Le Verrier and Adams,' he would say, 'had both arrived by mathematical demonstration at the existence of Neptune, but Le Verrier got the physical demonstration first. That was the case with me and the Dreadnought — that's all. I was Le Verrier, but Adams would have produced the same result if he had been given more time.' It was Admiral Sir Percy Scott's invention of fire-control that was the real seed of the all-big-gun ship. The advantage of the single-calibre gun had impressed itself upon Admiral Fisher, and with Sir Percy's new discovery he saw the possibility of developing his idea. With that in view he brought Captain Jellicoe to assist him as Controller of the Ordnance Department.

Captain Jellicoe was one of the young officers he had snatched out of obscurity on account of the ability he had discovered in him. Jellicoe had that modern and apprehensive type of mind that appealed to Admiral Fisher, who was sensible that the wonderful achievements of science were changing the orientation of naval thought and needed rapid, unbiassed minds to apply and coördinate them. Captain Jellicoe had won particular fame in connection with the improvement he had effected in the gunnery of the navy, and Admiral Fisher had already marked him out for the command of the navy should war

come within the period of his influence. It is well known in the service how ruthlessly he worked to clear the path of his protégé, and how success came at the last moment, when Jellicoe emerged over the bodies of many admirals to the post of Admiralissimo of the Fleet.

It was with feverish energy that the Dreadnought, once wrung from a reluctant board, was thrown together. It was constructed within a year and with the utmost secrecy, and its appearance created an unexampled storm. The service was rent in twain by the problems raised by the new ship, and Lord Charles Beresford headed the attack on the new theories involved. But the effect on the naval service in England was trifling to the effect in Germany. The launching of the Dreadnought was the launching of a bolt against the German navy. It was not merely the question of the superiority of the all-big-gun ship that was at issue. It is true that, if the type prevailed, England had got a new start of an invaluable character. But there was another point far more important. The Kiel Canal had just been finished. It was a great achievement of engineering that linked the Baltic at last with the North Sea, and gave the navy the absolute essential of free unobstructed movement in German waters. But a ship of the type of the Dreadnought could not pass through the Kiel Canal, and nearly ten years must elapse before the Canal could be so deepened as to receive it. In a word, Admiral Fisher had put the Kiel Canal out of action for a decade, and in doing so had enormously depreciated the value of the German navy as a fighting machine. For a time, Admiral von Tirpitz was nonplussed between the alternative of building ships that would not go through the Kiel Canal and not building ships of equal power with those of the British navy. When at last he took the plunge he had



to make up for lost time. It is said that he paid £40,000 for the plans of the Dreadnought; but by the time he had got them they were largely worthless, for the Dreadnought was frankly a trial ship made to discover how such a ship should be built; and it is equally generally assumed that Von Tirpitz lost as much as he gained by the purloining of the plans. The result was that, while the British navy was correcting all the deficiencies revealed by the trial ship, Germany was laying down several ships according to the uncorrected specifications.

The invention of the Dreadnought may be taken as the opening of the second phase of the naval struggle between Germany and England. It was the answer to the challenge, and upon the way that answer was received depended the course of events. But once Admiral von Tirpitz had recovered from the shock, the question was never in doubt. So far from accepting the Dreadnought as a hint that serious competition was not to be tolerated, the German Admiralty seemed to seize on the advent of the new type of ship as the opportunity to make the competition much more effective. It was assumed that the Dreadnought had rendered the pre-Dreadnought types more or less obsolescent, and that a supremacy in all-big-gun ships would be the equivalent of naval supremacy. In pre-Dreadnoughts of the Edward VII class, and still more in the smaller vessels, the superiority of England was too overwhelming to be overtaken; but with the Dreadnought class the case was different. It was true that England had got away with the start, but not to an extent that made rivalry impossible.

With the adoption of the Dreadnought idea and the modifications of the naval law, the challenge of Germany assumed a reality that could no

longer be ignored and that now began seriously to affect the public mind. There had been an eager desire on the part of the Liberal government that came to power in 1906 to move in the direction of disarmament, and for three years the pace of ship-building was checked. But there was no response from the other side of the North Sea, and in 1909 something approaching a panic seized the British public. There followed a severe struggle in the Cabinet between Mr. McKenna, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who proposed to lay down six Dreadnoughts, and Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill, who wanted only four laid down. In the end there was a sham compromise on the basis of four, with a conditional four which in the end became an actual four, making, in all, not the six for which Mr. McKenna had asked, but eight.

After this demonstration of the determination of the country to maintain its position, a further attempt was made three years later to induce Germany to call a halt. Admiral Fisher had in the meantime retired from the Admiralty, being succeeded by Sir Arthur Wilson, and Mr. McKenna had been succeeded as civil head by Mr. Churchill, who announced the intention of the government to maintain a sixty per cent superiority in shipbuilding over its next rival, and accompanied the announcement with a proposal to Germany mutually to agree on a 'naval holiday year.' Again there was no response from the other side, and from that moment the prospect of arriving at any accommodation vanished, and the competition proceeded without any disguise.

#### IV

It left England, when the war broke out, still with an overwhelming prepon-

derance of capital ships and a still greater superiority of smaller craft. But the development of events, nevertheless, was awaited with some anxiety. The public mind had just previously been disturbed by a letter from Admiral Sir Percy Scott in which he had expressed the view that the submarine was in a large measure rendering the big ship obsolete. The view was hotly controverted, but the impression it created remained and added a new speculative element to the war when it came. Moreover, there was no basis of achievement on which to build confidence in the navy. It was a century since England had been engaged in a great naval war. In the interval the whole science of naval warfare had been revolutionized. Steam had displaced wind as the motive power, wooden ships had given place to iron ships, and battles were no longer fought — as Trafalgar was fought — by vessels that were lashed to each other, but by vessels five or even ten miles apart. With the exception of the battle in the Philippines and the battle of the Sea of Japan, there had been no serious example of naval warfare under the new conditions, and the relative values of things were largely a matter of theory and speculation. On paper the superiority of the British fleet was overwhelming and in the public mind its prestige was unchallenged, but it had still to pass through the ordeal by fire.

The selection at the last moment of Admiral Jellicoe as the Admiralissimo conveyed nothing to the public, to whom he was not even a name. His choice was largely due to the insistence of Lord Fisher, but it involved much further disregard of the traditions of seniority and very nearly led to something like a strike of admirals. Mr. Churchill, however, carried through the daring adventure with what, I believe, he himself called 'the courage of

ignorance' — ignorance, that is, of the strength of the traditions on which he trampled so heavily. On merits there was no challenge. Admiral Jellicoe had proved his capacity in every sphere of naval work, and he had shown that he possessed, not merely an unsurpassed knowledge of the instrument, but a spacious understanding of the possibilities of the new and untried factors of naval warfare. He had in the previous year commanded the attacking fleet in the naval manoeuvres, and his success had been, not only brilliant, but a little startling to the inner circle of naval experts. His courage and address in circumstances of danger were as remarkable as the veracity of his thought, the calmness of his judgment, and his high sense of duty. These qualities had been revealed more than once at the point of death — when he was wounded in the advance to the relief of Tientsin, and earlier in the tragedy of the ramming of the *Victoria*. He was Admiral Tryon's captain on that fatal occasion, but he was ill with fever in his cabin when the inexplicable blunder was made, and narrowly escaped with his life, — all the more narrowly because, as Admiral Sir G. Phipps Hornby has said, 'instead of going up to save himself, he went below to hurry up any who might be there.' When the ship foundered, he came to the surface necessarily in a state of exhaustion and was saved only by the help of a midshipman.

Probably the most fortunate circumstance for the Grand Fleet was the fact that it was transferred to the North Sea in the nick of time. It was on the Thursday night before the outbreak of war that the decision was taken, and it was acted on at once while the course was still clear of mines and submarines. I have reason to know that this early advantage in the great struggle for the sea was the source of much lamentation at Kiel. No less deep was the anger at

another step taken at the same time. Two Dreadnoughts for the Turkish government were at that moment approaching completion in the Tyne, and they were appropriated by the British Admiralty. The anger of Admiral von Tirpitz at this action was the more intense because, as there is good ground for thinking, the building of the ships had been financed with German money, and for all practical purposes they were a potential part of the German navy.

But these advantages, important though they were, did not touch the problem of the new and incalculable factors in naval warfare, and the early stages of the struggle were hardly reassuring. The victory of the British navy in the Heligoland Bight showed the superiority of British seamanship in the traditional operations of naval war, but the torpedoing of three British armored cruisers by one submarine gave a shock to public confidence, and seemed like a very serious confirmation of the view with which Sir Percy Scott had disturbed the public mind in the spring. Nor was this the only disquieting episode. The escape of the Goeben and the Breslau, — a very discreditable episode for which no one was punished, — the ill-advised and ill-fated action off Chile, and the long license allowed to the Emden, all served to qualify the fact that, broadly speaking, the British navy had established its superiority by sweeping the enemy's mercantile marine off the seas and locking the German navy up in German harbors.

There were facts, too, in connection with the control of the navy which added to the unsettled feeling of these anxious days. Prince Louis of Battenberg had been appointed First Sea Lord when Sir Arthur Wilson retired two or three years before. It was generally agreed when Mr. Churchill made the appointment that Prince Louis owed nothing to his social position and

that he was a first-rate sailor. But the selection was ill-advised, especially if Mr. Churchill realized, as he must have done, that war with Germany was at least conceivable. There was of course no doubt about the absolute loyalty of Prince Louis; but the fact remained that he was a German, born in Germany and owning property in Germany; and it was just neither to him nor to the country that the navy at a critical time should be under such equivocal control. Rumors of the wildest sort filled the public mind, and it was unavoidable that suspicion that spared no one should be particularly busy with the First Sea Lord, who was popularly reported to be in the Tower. He was of course at the Admiralty doing his duty, but the suspicion that enveloped him could not but be fatal to his efficiency, for if he acted on his own initiative with unfortunate results it was obvious that the darkest construction would be put on his motives by the ignorant.

In these circumstances, Mr. Churchill exercised a power which did not properly belong to the civil head of the Admiralty, and he exercised it with that enjoyment of action which is his chief characteristic. Mr. Churchill has astonishing energy of mind, but it is an energy that needs a strong control from without, for, more than any man in public life, he is the slave of an idea. He does not possess it, but is obsessed by it; and once he is started in its pursuit, his momentum is unchecked by consideration for any restraints however sacred or for any opinion however authoritative. He has genius, but it is genius which is feverish and fanatical; and when during his Home Secretaryship he brought artillery up to bombard the alien murderers in Sidney Street, he gave a revelation of himself which was conclusive to those who appreciated the significance of melodrama in the political sphere. There was a

feeling that he was not indisposed to leave Prince Louis at the Admiralty for the sake of the influence it gave him over the operations of the navy; but Prince Louis very properly relieved the situation by resigning his position, and the return of Lord Fisher as the professional head of the navy was universally welcomed.

Lord Fisher's influence was immediately felt. The folly of leaving ships of the Canopus type to round up Von Spee was at once corrected. 'What is the use of sending the tortoise to catch the hare?' asked Lord Fisher with his picturesque humor. 'Why did the Almighty give greyhounds long legs?' And without an hour's delay the fastest cruisers in the fleet were dispatched to give Von Spee battle. There were protests. The ships could not be spared, and if they were spared some days must elapse before the necessary repairs could be executed. 'You may take the whole dockyard with you, but you must sail at once.' They sailed at once, and they had hardly an hour to spare, for they were still coaling at the Falkland Islands when Von Spee's squadron was sighted.

## v

But the collision of two such masterful men as Lord Fisher and Mr. Churchill meant trouble, and it came with the proposal to make a naval attack on the Dardanelles. The political and economic importance of a successful stroke here was obvious, and to the dramatic genius of Mr. Churchill the adventure was irresistible. But Lord Fisher was opposed to creating a new theatre of naval warfare. The war was to be won and lost in the North Sea, and any weakening of power in the crucial theatre of action was a mistake. In any case, the attack must not be an unsupported naval enterprise. The Straits

were held to be invulnerable to the navy, and a necessary preliminary was to secure the command of the narrows by an effective occupation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. But time was short, the stakes were high, a big success was needed, Greece at the moment seemed on the brink of joining the Allies, and the political considerations enabled Mr. Churchill to have his way, and the navy was launched against the forts of the Straits. Lord Fisher, 'swearing he would ne'er consent, consented,' and must bear his part of the responsibility for the failure that culminated in the loss of three battleships on March 18. With that disaster, the gravity of the task was fully realized, the unsupported naval attack was stopped, and preparations were made for landing an army on the Peninsula. But the possibility of a surprise had now vanished, for the Turks had had two months' warning and had converted the Peninsula into a fortress.

Meanwhile a new conflict had arisen between Mr. Churchill and Lord Fisher as to the use of the fleet in the Dardanelles. Lord Fisher was indisposed to run any more risks with his capital ships in such perilous waters, and finally, convinced that coöperation with the First Lord was impossible, sent in his resignation. Then followed the Cabinet crisis, and Mr. Churchill disappeared from the Admiralty. But that was not enough to induce Lord Fisher to withdraw his resignation. He would not remain if Mr. Churchill continued in the Cabinet, for he had now come to the conclusion that nothing but the entire elimination of the ex-First Lord would prevent him from exercising his masterful influence on naval strategy. But Lord Fisher had put his back to the wall too late. He was implicated in the first failure, and that fact destroyed his power to dictate conditions which challenged the authority of the

Prime Minister as to the composition of his new Cabinet. But though he had lost personally, Lord Fisher had won on the main issue. The Queen Elizabeth was brought home and no more risks were run with capital ships.

With the passing of this storm and its tragic warnings an entirely new régime was established at the Admiralty. Mr. Balfour, who has succeeded Mr. Churchill, is not an adventurer, but a philosopher who has strayed into politics as Herbert Spencer used to stray into the billiard room for a little light amusement. But he has seriousness and wide understanding, and is free from the egoism which would lead him to override instructed and expert opinion.

Associated with him as First Sea Lord is a man far removed from the imaginative force and masterful temper of Lord Fisher. Admiral Jackson belongs to the official strain, but he has, in addition to his character as an efficient seaman, the important merit of being one of the greatest living authorities on the torpedo and submarine warfare. The government showed an appreciation of the teachings of the war by giving weight to this fact in making the new appointment. The main problems of strategy were clear; the superiority of our ships, our guns, and our seamanship was established; but in the more subtle spheres of the struggle Germany had won conspicuous successes. It will be the chief indictment against

Admiral von Tirpitz that before the war he did not realize his problem. He imitated the British navy, and did not discover until war began that his real offensive instrument was the submarine. It is from that weapon that the menace has come.

There is general agreement that, in the light of that menace, the whole problem of naval construction will have to be reconsidered. Doubtless science, which has invented the bane, will also invent the antidote; but at present there is no assurance that the submarine may not be the master of the situation, and in that case the security of the British Islands will be imperiled. It is for this reason that every resource of knowledge is being applied to the submarine problem, and Lord Fisher has himself returned to the Admiralty to take charge of the inventions department. It is the crucial sphere. We may laugh at the 'blockade' and denounce the crimes with which it is enforced. But the fact remains that the submarine has shown us that we are vulnerable. Had Germany understood that at the beginning; had she, instead of starting the war with 30 submarines, started it with 300, the outlook to-day would have been much more serious. As it is, the future is shadowed with a peril which seems ilimitable, and if we are to compass that peril and make the seas about our shores again inviolate, the answer to the submarine must be found.

## THE TRUE GERMANY

BY KUNO FRANCKE

### I

MUCH of the criticism of Germany in English and American war literature of the past few months is written in such a vein as to leave the impression that the Germany of to-day is not the real Germany, that it is a perversion of its former self, and that the delivery of the German people from this perverted state and the restoration of the German mind to its earlier and truer type is a demand of humanity, and the real issue of the present war. I have no doubt that most of the persons who hold this view hold it in all seriousness and candor. It therefore seems to me eminently worth while to discuss it with equal seriousness and candor, to examine the foundations on which it rests, to sift what is true and authentic in it from what is specious and sophisticated, and thus to find out what the real relation is between contemporary Germany and the Germany of a hundred years ago; to determine, in brief, to what extent the contemporary German type has preserved and embodies what by the opponents of Imperial Germany is called the true German type.

I am free to confess that I personally feel more at home in the idyllic atmosphere of the Weimar and Jena of the end of the eighteenth century than in the martial industrialism of the Berlin or Hamburg of the beginning of the twentieth. The classic age of Weimar and Jena was one of those rare epochs in the world's history when spiritual achievements outbalanced the mani-

festations of material power. Indeed, I doubt whether there ever was a time in which inner strivings so clearly overshadowed external conditions as in the decades that produced Goethe's *Iphigenie* and *Faust*, or Schiller's *Wallenstein* and *Tell*. Germany was then a country of small towns and villages, a land of prevailingly agricultural pursuits. It had no centralized national government, no national parliament, no national army, no national politics of any sort. On the other hand, there was in the Germany of that time a great deal of provincial and local independence, a great variety of intellectual centres, a great deal of patriarchal dignity and simple refinement in the ordinary conduct of life. The great concern of life was the building up of a well-rounded personality, the rational cultivation of individual talent and character. And the ideal of personality was contained in the threefold message of Kant, Goethe, and Schiller: the exaltation of duty as the only true revelation of the divine, the exaltation of restless striving for completeness of existence as the way in which erring man works out his own salvation, and the exaltation of æsthetic culture as a means of reconciling the eternal conflict between the senses and the spirit and of leading man to harmony and oneness with himself.

Noble and inspiring as was this ideal of personality established by the classic epoch of German literature and philosophy, it lacked one essential element of effectiveness: it was nearly devoid of



the impulse of national self-assertion. This impulse was added to German life by the dire need of the Napoleonic wars, by the stern necessity of summoning the whole strength of the whole people against the ruin threatened by foreign oppression. It was Napoleonic tyranny which created the German nation.

It would, however, be a great mistake to believe that this new conception of German nationality, which was born out of the political wreck of the old German Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century, discarded the high ideal of personality proclaimed by the classic writers of the eighteenth century. On the contrary, the noble triad of ideal incentives of personal conduct bequeathed by them — submission to duty, incessant striving for ever higher activity, and belief in the moral mission of æsthetic culture — was made by their successors the very cornerstone of the new national training upon which the German state of the nineteenth century was to be reared. It might indeed be said that the share taken by these ideals in shaping German public consciousness and in creating German national institutions forms the most important part of German history in the nineteenth century, and has imparted to it many of its most distinctive and characteristic traits. To trace the effect of these ideals upon some at least of the most striking phases of German national life throughout the past hundred years, is tantamount to proving the presence, in Imperial Germany of to-day, of the same spiritual forces which were the glory of cosmopolitan Germany in the time of Kant, Goethe, and Schiller.

## II

It is a trite saying that the Prussian state is a living embodiment and a con-

crete application, upon a large scale, of Kantian principles of duty. Trite as this saying is, it may not be superfluous to analyze its meaning somewhat more closely. There can be no doubt that it is historically correct in so far as the founders of modern Prussia were, directly or indirectly, disciples of the Kantian philosophy. Not that Kant's views on politics and public affairs did in any specific manner shape Prussian legislation of the early nineteenth century; his views were too individualistic and too little concerned with national needs for that. Not Kant but the men who followed him — Stein, Hardenberg, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Fichte, and Hegel — have been official exponents, so to speak, of the mission of Prussia for a regenerated Germany. But it is nevertheless true that the spirit of the whole work of legislative reform which brought about the reconstruction of Prussia after the battle of Jena would not have been what it was but for the influence of Kant's thought. 'Thou canst, for thou shalt' — these words in which Kant epigrammatically summed up his view of life were indeed the fundamental creed of all those noble men who, in the years following the Prussian débâcle, tried, as Frederick William III said, to help the state 'to replace by spiritual agencies what it had lost in physical resources.'

The one thought pervading the Stein-Hardenberg legislation from 1807 to 1810 was to release from inertia and set in motion moral power. By the abolition of serfdom, the mass of the agricultural population was to be converted from a herd of dumb and lifeless subjects into active and spirited workers. By the establishment of municipal self-government throughout Prussia, the cities were to be made a training ground for intelligent and effective participation of the middle classes in public affairs. By the introduction of

universal military service, the obligation of every individual of whatever rank or station to prepare to defend with his own life the common cause, was to be made an integral part of the daily existence of the whole people. Stein himself frankly and plainly characterizes the intention of all these legislative measures when in his Reminiscences he says, 'We started from the fundamental idea of rousing a moral, religious, patriotic spirit in the nation; of inspiring it anew with courage, self-confidence, readiness for every sacrifice in the cause of independence and of national honor; and of seizing the first favorable opportunity to begin the bloody and hazardous struggle for both.' Little as Kant was given to the expression of patriotic emotions, he would surely have recognized the kinship of such utterances as these, and their practical applications, with his own fundamental conviction that man's dignity and freedom consist in the unconditional surrender to duty, and that the aim of society is, not the largest possible gratification of the individual instinct for happiness, but the highest possible expression, in individual activity, of mankind's striving for perfection.

If the political and military reconstruction of Prussia through Stein and Hardenberg may be called an outgrowth of the Kantian conception of moral discipline, the reorganization of higher Prussian education, connected with the names of Wilhelm von Humboldt and Fichte, is clearly based on similar views. In temper and in intellectual sympathies these men were diametrically opposed to each other: Fichte a radical fire-eater, Humboldt a conservative statesman; Fichte a fanatic spokesman of the Germanic craving for the infinite, Humboldt a placid devotee of Greek beauty of form; Fichte a democratic prophet of Socialism,

Humboldt an aristocratic upholder of individual culture. But they were at one in the Kantian belief that the aim of education is the training of the will; they were at one in the conviction that it was the educational mission of the Prussian state to create a new type of national character. The most striking result of the efforts of these men was the foundation of the University of Berlin in the very midst of national humiliation and distress, one of the most shining manifestations of faith in the superiority of ideal aspirations over the tyranny of facts that the world has ever seen. But the founding of the University of Berlin was only the most striking result of the efforts of these men's efforts; perhaps even further-reaching, though less conspicuous, was the reorganization of the whole system of public-school instruction throughout Prussia that proceeded from them and their associates. For it was in the first decades of the nineteenth century that Prussia, by combining the democratic ideal of making higher education financially accessible to all classes of society with the aristocratic ideal of stimulating, by careful selection of individuals, the race for intellectual leadership, came to be the foremost organized educational power in Europe. And in the Prussian *Gymnasia* of the early nineteenth century the categorical imperative of Kant's moral law assumed a particularly energetic and life-inspiring form; for here the intellectually finest of the Prussian youth of all classes, the son of the butcher or the seamstress no less than the son of the prince and the prime minister, met on the common ground of training for the university; here they were imbued, as the youth of no other nation were, with the duty of surrendering themselves to higher motives and of making themselves fit instruments of the spirit. 'Work or perish' was the motto chosen for his own

guidance by one of the successors of Humboldt in the administration of the Prussian *Gymnasia*; it might be called the motto of the whole Prussian educational policy.

In Hegel's conception of the state this line of moral regeneration that took its start from the Kantian view of duty reached its climax. To Hegel the state is 'the realization of the ethical idea; it is the ethical spirit as incarnate, self-conscious, substantial will.' The state is to him an organism uniting in itself all spiritual and moral aspirations of the people, stimulating every kind of public and private activity, straining every nerve and protecting every resource, subordinating all individual comfort to the one great aim of national achievements. It is the source of inspiration for every progress in organization, invention, industrial enterprise, scientific inquiry, philosophical speculation, artistic creation. It is 'the manifestation of the divine on earth.'

These were the ideas under whose influence generation after generation of the Prussian people, from the beginning of the nineteenth century on, grew up and did their work. These were the ideas which overthrew Napoleon; the ideas which in the thirties and forties, in spite of its overbearing bureaucracy and its reactionary statesmen, made Prussia the only German state from which the political unification of Germany could be looked for; the ideas which in the sixties, under the leadership of such extraordinary men as William I, Bismarck, Moltke, and Lasalle, brought about, on the one hand, the foundation of the new German Empire, on the other hand the organization of the most compact and the most enlightened labor party of modern history.

We have fallen into the habit of summing up this whole set of ideas under the word efficiency. And efficiency it

certainly is which all of Germany has been taught by the Prussian conception of the state. But in applying this word to the Germany of to-day we should not forget that it is efficiency inspired by high ideals, by the Kantian precept of the unconditional submission to duty. Can there be any doubt that the spirit shown by the whole German people in the present war is a wonderful exhibition of strength put into the service of moral commands? I certainly do not wish to belittle the spirit of self-sacrifice manifested by other nations in this war. Who above all could fail to have the deepest sympathy with the Belgian people in their heroic defense of their homes and hearths? But none of the nations now fighting, I believe, is filled with the same joyous, jubilant exultancy of self-surrender, the same unswerving and undoubting obedience to the inner voice, the same unshakable conviction of fighting for the best that is in them, that the Germans have shown.

Germany in this conflict has had no need of calling for volunteers: two million of them, from boys of eighteen to graybeards of sixty-five, offered themselves spontaneously without a call at the very proclamation of war. Germany has had no need of a spasmodic resort to prohibition legislation; her soldiers and her workmen are disciplined enough to keep in fit condition for the manufacture and the use of arms. Germany has had no need of scouring Asia and Africa for savage hirelings to wage her war: her own sons, thousands of business and professional men, flocked from all over China to the colors in besieged Kiao-chao, with the absolute certainty of either death or capture, impelled by no other motive than to make good the truly Kantian cablegram sent by the commandant of the fortress to the Emperor: 'Guarantee fulfillment of duty to the utmost.'

In military achievements, can any of the nations that are besetting Germany match her by such examples of trained intelligence, consummate skill, iron determination, persistent daring, unquestioning devotion,—in short such examples of personalities steeled by obedience to the categorical imperative,—as Germany has given in the captain and the crew of the Emden; in the career of the Dresden and the Eitel Friedrich; in the submarines that made their way from the North Sea, through the Straits of Gibraltar, into the Dardanelles; or in that living wall of millions of men that are steadily and relentlessly flinging back the assault upon her own frontiers by all the great powers of Europe?

I cannot forego quoting from some letters which I have received during the winter from one of these men,—letters which illustrate the spirit ingrained into all Germany by a century of Prussian tradition of character-building. The writer is at the head of one of Germany's foremost publishing houses. Although a man of over sixty, he volunteered at the outbreak of the war, together with his oldest son, a young musician of unusual promise. The son fell in one of the early engagements near Dixmude; the father is captain in a Landsturm regiment holding the trenches around Lille. These are among the things he writes:—

'A friendly fate has after all taken me and my Landsturm battalion into the enemy's country, directly behind the long war front which is gradually being pushed westward. I had already begun to fear that I would be kept all the time in guarding prisoners' camps, which, easy as the service is, would have come to be intolerably tedious in the long run. Happily, my wife has stood the double leave-taking better than I feared. The night before Heinrich's [the son's] departure, she sat all

night long at his bed, he peacefully sleeping with his hand lying in hers and only from time to time awakening for a moment to feel the comfort of being thus guarded. "As a mother comfort-eth"—the scripture says. When at five o'clock in the morning he had left her with the words, "You are a wonder of a mother," and she was sitting alone in the dining-room sobbing, suddenly a little angel in a nightgown [the youngest boy] came downstairs and put his hand in hers, reminding her of what was still left to her.'

'Volunteer R. missing since November 10," is a wireless message from the 234th regiment that reached me yesterday, after my wife and I for a fortnight had been worried by the absence of all news and later had been startled by postal cards addressed to the boy being returned, with the official mark, "wounded." When or whether we shall ever hear anything definite about his fate is doubtful. What alarms me most is my poor wife. God give her trust and strength. I myself shall pull through; the constant duties of the day, the intercourse with comrades, and horseback riding will help me. And happily, my wife and I find the same well of comfort in the Word of God, which one *lives* in these days as never before, without any dogmatic doubts. And how can we ask anything special for ourselves, when each and all make such sacrifices for the Fatherland? These sacrifices will not be in vain.'

'Since yesterday I know that I shall not see Heinrich again. What this means for us, I need not tell you. I had labored and labored to make my heart firm, but that the blow would be so terrific, so crushing, I had not imagined. My wife thus far has struggled through heroically, in the clear consciousness that she must save herself for our youngest and me, so far as it is in her

power. If the same feeling did not uphold me, I would, in spite of my age and my poor hearing, apply to be transferred to the first line. We cannot understand the sufferings which now are heaped upon us and countless others. The only help is to go on with our tasks. Christmas time will give my wife plenty of opportunity to show love to others and thereby to combat the void at her own hearth.'

'The day before yesterday, since I could not get any definite news, I rode about sixty kilometres northward into Flanders. That I could do it I owe to special circumstances. What would happen, if the roads, crowded with troops as they are, and the precious motor cars were often used thus for the sake of a poor common soldier! After some searching about, I at last found Heinrich's company, shrunk from 250 to 90, quartered in a little church at West Roosebecke, the tower of which had been demolished in order not to attract the fire of the enemy near by. Soon I was surrounded by a crowd of young men who had taken part in the last battle together with Heinrich. He had been among the skirmishers in front of the storming company, they said. Close before the enemy's line, he was shot through the left arm, tried to creep back, was shot in the back, fell over, and was left dead on the ground, next to his friend and classmate K. Since the French shoot even at men burying the dead, they could not bury him. A few days before, Heinrich himself had rescued a wounded comrade who had crept into a baking-oven directly in front of the enemy's position. They said he had been more spirited and exuberant and joyous in the performance of his duties than most of his comrades. What could he have been to them in the long evenings, as they were huddled together in that little church.'

'Of war-weariness or discouragement

there is not a shadow of a trace among us. Detachments of the recruits of 1914 have just arrived here, to finish their drill in the enemy's country. They are singing, singing, singing, wherever you meet them, just like the volunteers of last August of whom so many are now sleeping underground. My heart grows tender when I talk with them or look at them while I ride past them. Our opponents have no conception of what stuff our people is made.'

### III

By the side of Kant's stern doctrine of duty there must be placed, as another of the great legacies left to Germany by her classic writers, the Goethean gospel of salvation through ceaseless striving. It is Goethe who has impressed upon German life the Superman motif. As his own life was a combination of Wilhelm Meister and Faust in their undaunted striding from experience to experience and in their ever-renewed efforts to round out their own being, so it may be said that there is something Faustlike and something Meisterlike in most of the representative men of German literature in the nineteenth century, above all in Heinrich von Kleist, Hebbel, Otto Ludwig, Richard Wagner, Nietzsche. None of these men were religious formalists; to all of them life was an experiment of deepest import; all of them found the value of life in wrestling with its fundamental problems. And this whole tradition of striving has imparted even to the average German of to-day a mental strenuousness and an emotional intensity such as is absent from the average European of other stock, not to mention the average American. A strange spectacle indeed, and an inspiring one: a people naturally slow and of phlegmatic temper stirred to its depths by intellectual and spiritual forces and



thereby keyed up to an eagerness and swiftness of action which gives it easily the first place in the race for national self-improvement. What other people equals the German in the readiness to react upon stimuli from abroad, to adopt and incorporate ideas grown on foreign soil? Where have Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, Calderón, Ibsen exerted as truly popular and deeply penetrating an influence as in Germany? Where have they become educational forces of equal momentum? Is there any other country where the knowledge of foreign languages is so widely spread? any other country where there is so much individual desire for solid learning? any other country where individual talent is as carefully and conscientiously cultivated? any other country where there is so much honest and serious effort to approach the great questions of existence from an individual angle, to restate them in personal terms, to find new answers and new vistas?

American students who have lived in German families of the middle classes, for instance the family of a *Gymnasiallehrer* or a government official, will bear testimony to the fact that German daily life of to-day in all these respects upholds the Goethean tradition of a hundred years ago. Indeed, the reign of the present Emperor has given particularly conspicuous evidence of this spirit of striving and effort penetrating all departments of life. For what sphere of activity is there in which the Emperor's example, his universal and impassioned impulse for achievement, has not borne fruit? Only one of these fruits, matured in the midst of the present war, may be singled out. In October, 1914, there was formally opened, with simple ceremonies, the new University of Frankfort, the first German university to be founded by an individual city. Well may the

professors and students of this latest German university be proud of the date of its birth. For it will proclaim to posterity that not even the most fearful crisis that ever befell a people has been able to crush the German striving for ideal achievements, the Faustlike determination to make every new experience a stepping-stone for a higher one, and thus to press on to completeness of existence.

Together with Kant and Goethe, Schiller stands as guardian of the best that the German people has contributed to human progress in the nineteenth century. To him more than to any other individual is it due that the German people believes as no other people believes in the moral mission of æsthetic culture. Schiller's whole activity was rooted in the conviction that beauty is the great reconciler, that not only in the creation of the beautiful but also in its enjoyment man overcomes the conflict between his sensuous and his spiritual nature, becomes at one with himself, rises to his full stature. This conviction, consciously embraced by the educated, instinctively absorbed by the masses, has come to be one of the great popular forces that have moulded German national character in the nineteenth century and distinguished it from the emotional life of most other peoples.

To the German, the drama is a sacred matter. He looks to it for inspiration, widening of sympathies, upheaval of emotions, cleansing of purpose, strengthening of the will. From Schiller on to Hauptmann and Schönherr, generation after generation of German dramatic writers has tried to live up to this ideal, not always with full artistic success, always with nobility of aim. Any one who has attended the annual performances at Weimar, arranged by the Schillerbund for the flower of German youth from all over



the empire, will know something of the effect which this view of the drama has exercised upon the German people. Even now, in the midst of the war, when in London the serious stage has given way to the noisy and sensational vaudeville show, the German theatres in all cities, large and small, maintain and emphasize the classic tradition and add their share to the ennobling of national character.

To the German, music is a sacred matter. Who could describe what Beethoven and Schubert and Schumann and Wagner have been to the German people throughout these past hundred years? Who could measure the wealth of comfort, delight, strength, elevation, which song — song giving wings to the feelings of an Uhland, Eichendorff, Heine, Lenau, Geibel — has showered upon countless German homes? And Beethoven, as well as folk-song, has accompanied the German nation into the war. Not a catchy and meaningless music-hall tune is what the German soldiers love to sing in the trenches, but 'Es braust ein Ruf wie Donnerhall,' or 'In der Heimat, in der Heimat — da giebt's ein Wiedersehn!'

To the German, the enjoyment of nature is a sacred matter. A short time before his death, in his eightieth year, Ludwig Tieck declared that the greatest event in his whole life, the event which had influenced and shaped his character more than any other, had been a sunrise which he had watched as a youth of eighteen when he was tramping in the Thuringian mountains. That is German sentiment. That is what millions of Germans feel to-day. That is what makes the flowerpots bloom behind the windowpanes — kept so scrupulously clean — of German tenement houses; what has transformed the public squares of German cities into parks and meadows; what makes Whitsuntide, with its joyful roaming through

field and forest, with its bedecking of all houses with the young foliage, the most charming of all German holidays. That is what made the 'field-gray' of the German troops marching into war last August disappear under such masses of roses as if all the German gardens had emptied themselves upon them.

No, the Germany of to-day is not a perversion of a former and better type. It is a normal and splendid outgrowth of national ideals that have been at work for more than a century, — the ideals of training the will, of stimulating energy, and of cultivating the soul. To give once more concrete illustrations of the type of personality developed under the influence of these ideals, I quote again from some letters that I received at the beginning of this year. This is from a widow living near Lake Constance, whose eldest son, a young Uhlan who volunteered fresh from the *Gymnasium*, had come home on furlough for the Christmas holidays.

'On the twenty-fourth I rode to Constance to fetch our Christmas surprise, our dear tall Uhlan who was allowed to spend three whole days with us. It was a wonderful time for us. The children dragged him about everywhere, from the cellar to the attic, from the garden into the field. It was a joy to see him playing for them gay riders' songs on the piano, whistling tunes to the guitar, etc. But he has grown very serious. A veil lies over his youthful face; and there is something touchingly protecting in the way in which he behaves toward the children. His features in repose are strangely sad; and strangely mature he seemed when he talked, so reservedly and yet so understandingly, with a neighbor who had just heard of the death of his only son. There were three steamers full of reservists when on the third day I accompanied him across the lake. Some fifty people were at the pier and waved good-bye. A

young lad next to us on the steamer, who had kept up waving back a long time, broke into despairing sobs when his aged mother vanished out of sight. But they all spoke firmly and with wonderful elevation about our beloved fatherland. It helped me to keep myself in hand. And now — as God wills.'

The next is from a young minister who studied at the Harvard Divinity School last year and who on the day of his return to Germany volunteered as a private. His three brothers were also in the field; two of them have since been killed. He was struck by a shell while carrying a wounded officer out of the firing line. The following words are from a letter written in the hospital on the day of his death.

'Depression of spirit I battle down with good weapons and good success. Anxious thought about my brothers makes me almost glad not to have any news from home. How long will it last? One must reach out for the great things.'

And this is from a young artillery officer, by profession a chemical expert in one of the great German industrial laboratories, who writes from the trenches at Ypres.

'After a magnificent sunset, we were called to the Christmas service. It was held in a barn; the walls covered with fir branches; torches and candles the only form of lighting; a curious mixture of the real stall of Bethlehem and our traditional Christmas. The chaplain spoke simply and nicely: Christmas should bring inner peace to us, even in the field, and make our whole army feel as one great family.

'Then our captain made an inspiring and patriotic address, with cheers for the Emperor, winding up with the distribution of some iron crosses, one of them falling to my lot. And finally the opening of the packages from home. What an infinite love these numberless

presents revealed; how they made us feel that the soul of Germany is with us in the fight! During the night — it was a still, clear, frosty night — we sent our improvised band into the trench nearest the French and had it play to them Christmas songs and marches. One really must guard one's self against sentimentality in these times. But this, I think, is true — that the war has created a mutual respect between the fighting peoples; and upon the basis of this mutual respect there may perhaps arise a more solid coöperation of nations than the friends of eternal peace have thus far been able to bring about.'

#### IV

How is it possible that a people animated by such a spirit, a people which for a century has assiduously and devotedly labored to produce types of human personality as noble and enlightened as any people ever has brought forth — how is it possible that such a people should suddenly appear to large numbers of intelligent observers as an enemy of mankind, as a menace to the security and peace of the rest of the world? Much of the hostile criticism of Imperial Germany, of its alleged sinister craving for world-dominion, or its atrocious conduct of the war, is outright slander and willful distortion. It is indeed a grim mockery to have the tentative and circumscribed efforts made by Germany during the past twenty-five years for colonial expansion denounced by the enemies of Germany as dangerous and intolerable aggression, when one remembers that during these same years England throttled the independence of the South African republics, established a protectorate over Egypt, partitioned Persia — together with Russia — into 'spheres of influence,' encouraged

France to build up an immense colonial empire in Cochin China, Madagascar, Tunis, and Morocco, allowed Italy to conquer Tripoli, and helped Japan to tighten her grip upon China. As to the manner of the German conduct of war, here also a huge mass of extraordinary exaggerations and a vast amount of anonymous aspersions have been indulged in. For the rest, these accusations find their explanation in the fact that Germany thus far has in the main been able to ward off the enemy from her own soil and to transfer the deadly work of destruction into the enemy's country.

And yet, there is a residuum of truth in the assertion that Germany during the last generation has overreached herself. So far as this is the case, she bears her part of the guilt of having conjured up the present world calamity. In saying this, I am not thinking of Germany's consistent policy of formidable armament. For I fail to see how Germany could have afforded not to prepare for war, so long as she found herself surrounded by neighbors every one of them anxious to curb her rising power. What I am thinking of is a spirit of superciliousness which, as a very natural concomitant of a century of extraordinary achievement, has developed, especially during the last twenty-five years, in the ruling classes of Germany.

The manifestations of this spirit have been many and varied. In German domestic conditions, it has led to the growth of a capitalistic class as snobbish and overbearing as it is resourceful and intelligent, counteracting by its uncompromising *Herrenmoral* the good effect of the wise and provident social legislation inaugurated by Bismarck. It has led to excesses of military rule and to assertions of autocratic power which have embittered German party politics and have driven large numbers of Liberal voters into

the Socialist ranks, as the only party consistently and unswervingly upholding Parliamentary rights. In Germany's foreign relations, it has led to a policy which was meant to be firm but had an appearance of arrogance and aggressiveness and easily aroused suspicion. Suspicion of Germany led to her isolation. And her isolation has finally brought on the war.

It should, however, be said that these excesses of German vitality, so skillfully used by anti-German writers to discredit Germany's position in the present conflict, have not, as is asserted, been a serious danger to the rest of the world. Rather have they been an element of weakness to Germany herself. They are not essentially different from the spirit of haughty masterfulness that characterized English foreign policies and English insular self-sufficiency throughout the larger part of the nineteenth century; or from the French belief in the superiority of France in all matters of higher civilization; or even from the American assumption that the United States is the foremost standard-bearer of international justice and righteousness. They are an impressive instance of that tragic national self-overestimation which seems to be inseparable from periods of striking national ascendancy, both quickening and endangering this ascendancy itself.

Let us hope that this tragic situation — the catastrophe of greatness, induced, partly at least, through the faults of its virtues — will have a solution worthy of the noble ideals that sustained Germany's upward flight. Let us hope that it will lead to the purging, purifying, and strengthening of German greatness through this fearful trial. A letter received recently from a German judge, now fighting as lieutenant on the Russian frontier, points to such a hope. He writes: 'The conduct of our men in this war is beyond all

praise. Whatever may be the outcome of the war, the German people is bound to gain by it in inner strength. All classes have come to know what they are to each other, and we confidently trust that they will never forget it. The party strife thus far waged with venom and hatred will give way to a generous and objective discussion of honestly conflicting opinions, and the ideal of constructive social work will be more fully grasped and more devotedly pursued than ever before. To us in the field, that will be the best reward.'

Whether these hopes of the future are ever fulfilled in their totality or

not, our survey of the past and the present of Germany has, I trust, made it clear that the German people of to-day is not, as its enemies declare, a degenerate perversion of a former and nobler type. On the contrary, with all its defects and excrescences of temper, it is a splendid outgrowth of a century's training in the national application of those ideals which distinguished the classic period of German literature and philosophy: unconditional submission to duty, unremitting endeavor for intellectual advance, assiduous cultivation of the things that give joy to the soul. A people that believes in these ideals cannot be lost.

## A YEAR OF WAR'S EMOTIONS

BY SIMEON STRUNSKY

If I were to attempt anything like a formal account of the first year of the war, the subject would naturally fall apart into campaigns and 'phases,' bounded by dates of day and month more or less precise. It would be the campaign in the West and the campaign in the East, the war in Belgium, the invasion of France, the battle of the Marne, the Russians in East Prussia, the Russians in Galicia, the Germans before Warsaw, the Germans across the Vistula, and so on, in orderly textbook fashion. But when I think back upon the past months as a man and not as a war expert, the chronicle does not present itself as a succession of events and phases, but as a succession of moods and states of mind. The record I most clearly visualize is less of what

was going on in Europe than of what was going on in me, and millions like myself, in reaction to the news from the battlefields and the capitals. It is a record of what people in this neutral country thought and talked about, the fluctuation of their hopes and fears, their pities and indignations, their speculations on the world-issues at stake, and their wagers as to whether the war would end before November, 1916. For a review of this kind, maps and charts, names and dates, are of little help, though the concrete event and time underlie, of course, what may be called the psychic chronicle of the war. Such a psychic record, too, falls apart into phases and movements, but they are not always chronologically definable.

The first of the mental periods we

lived through was the period of Belgian achievement as distinguished from the period of Belgian suffering. To the extent that chronology can bound a psychological state this phase ran for something like four weeks, from the first gun at Liège to Cambrai and St. Quentin. It was a time when men's hearts glowed with the vision of righteousness apparently prevailing against might, and of the unconquerable soul of man. During the first three weeks of August, it seemed as if David and Goliath had returned and the colossus of Europe had been shattered by a pigmy. The tradition which was born around Sedan and Metz and had hovered over Europe for nearly half a century had vanished, apparently. The reputation of the German army was gone, the work of Bismarck was undone, and a great many of us were wondering just what would be done with the Hohenzollern. It was the golden age of the war. Right had shown that it was stronger than brute force, the sanctity of treaties had been vindicated, the small nations were to be definitely relieved of the nightmare of absorption by the swollen empires, Belgium was to be rewarded for her pains, Poland was to be restored, the Balkan peoples were to expand along the channels of nationality, a broad belt of neutralized nations between Germany and France was to guard Europe against the recurrence of catastrophe.

There followed a period of severe psychic reaction which I think of as the Sayville or Von Kluck period. After four weeks of isolation, Germany was in touch with her wireless towers on Long Island, and the first news she gave to the world was that force, after all, was having its own way against righteousness. Already we knew that Brussels had fallen, but that, we said, was largely for strategic reasons, or, at worst, because of a delay in the ap-

*VOL. 116 - NO. 4*

proach of French and British reinforcements. We had some hint, too, that the French were not doing as well as they should have done, measured by Belgium's showing, but we were not yet adept in translating the official language of the dispatches, with their vague regroupings and retirements and their confused geography.

Then, in the last days of August, Germany, by way of Sayville, announces victory on every hand — victory in Alsace, in Lorraine, in Belgian Luxembourg, victory at Charleroi, and at Mons. The iron ring is drawing tight around France, and Von Kluck shoots up in the headlines. For two weeks after that the world reëchoes to the iron-shod tramp of Von Kluck. The Uhlan of the early Belgian period retires into the background and the invincible Right Wing sweeps on toward Paris.

These were days and nights when the thought of the Kaiser's regiments marching up the Champs Elysées, made everything else, even to us, three thousand miles away, of little consequence. Something more than a campaign or a war was being decided: the world as men had known it was coming to an end. I have called it the Sayville or Von Kluck period. It might as well be called the period of Greater Sedan. The question was no longer of French victory, but whether the French could escape a Greater Sedan; to avert that was victory enough. Men became superstitious and argued by the calendar. They counted from the declaration of war on July 19, 1870, to Sedan on September 2, 1870, and found it was forty-five days; and then they counted from the declaration of war on August 1, 1914, and gained solace from the thought that if the fatal forty-fifth day passed without the Germans in Paris or the French army destroyed, that too would be a victory. And at Paris they spoke

defiantly of falling back to the Pyrenees, if necessary.

I think of the period which followed as the Time-against-Germany period. By this time people were aware that the work of Von Moltke and Bismarck was not undone, that the German army was what forty-five years of preparation should have made it, that the Germans were apparently winning. Only they were not winning fast enough. Time ran against the Kaiser, and we spoke of the Russian steam-roller. The Russian steam-roller came to grief in the mud of the Masurian Lakes; and, after a painful process of extrication, started lumbering back to the Niemen. But just then came the battle of the Marne, and in a trice we were again portioning out the German Empire and exiling the Kaiser to St. Helena. The formal history of the war may yet show that at the Marne the German cause failed definitely, and that the swift rebound of spirits that followed the 'strategic withdrawal' of the German right wing was justified. At present we do not know. Nevertheless, we spoke of the Marne as the high tide of the German onset, which was not so, and we pictured the rest of the war as a steady Allied advance against the Rhine and the Oder, which was not so. But the present record is one of psychic ups and downs; and after the Marne the psychic state in this country rose to a crest of hopefulness. Would the Germans in their withdrawal from the Marne stop at the Meuse River, or would they keep on till they had reached the Rhine?

They did neither. They stopped at the Aisne River, and from the last week of September we began to think in terms of trenches and big guns. What Krupp had done at Liège and Namur in August he repeated at Maubeuge in early September, while the battle on the Marne was still in the balance, and drove home at Antwerp early in Octo-

ber. Up to the fall of Antwerp we had not lost our faith in the human quality as against the Krupp quality. Those were the days of Joffre and Sir John French and the beginning of the four weeks' race between Joffre and the Germans for Antwerp and the shores of the North Sea. Like a child stringing beads Joffre strung territorial battalions and cavalry brigades in a chain that seemed destined to reach the Belgian fortress before the heavy German guns.

But the German guns won the race, and for months after that we were under the shadow of the 42-centimetre. German generalship had been outwitted, but German brute strength was in the ascendant. Sixteen-inch guns, caterpillar wheels, motor traction, we saw little else. Just as during mobilization days the imaginative correspondents saw endless lines of troop trains pouring across Cologne bridge or shunted back to East Prussia, so now they followed the itinerary of the Krupp howitzers. Where the guns came they would conquer. How soon would the Germans have them before Verdun? It was assumed that Germany need only bring them before Verdun, and the walls of the fortress would go down like Jericho. Those were severe days of Krupp depression, but neutral spirits rose once more to a crest upon the wings of the trench. By the beginning of November the Germans were once more doomed to defeat. The heavy gun might have its way with the steel cupolas of the fortresses. It had found its match in the earthworks. By November 15 and the German failure around Ypres, the issue was decided. The water-logged ditch was the master. The Germans could not 'break through,' and we entered on the Kitcheners' Millions phase of the war and the great spring drive in Belgium. We waited.

While Kitcheners was gathering his



millions for the spring drive and the armies lay watchful but inert in the ditches, the deadlock gave us leisure for a campaign which I believe has impressed itself on the mind of the world more vividly than the strategy and casualties of Galicia and Flanders, and which to a great many of us will be the real war years after dates and names have sunk into obscurity. Who now can place Liao-yang and Mukden within their month or even the year? Who was Kodama? Who was Nodzu? Who, to answer instantaneously, was Kuroki? But we still remember Samurai and Bushido, Japanese loyalty and superstition, hara-kiri, Emperor worship, Elder Statesmen. So in the present war what will be longest remembered, I dare say, are not the battles and campaigns, but the passions far behind the battle-line. While Kitchener was drilling his men there raged the Battle of the Multi-colored Books, — white books, yellow books, orange books, blue books, green books, red books, — these being the Truth as revealed to the Foreign Offices of the various nations. Between covers of different hue the governments presented their case to the unbiased judgment of the nations who were fighting on one side or the other, or were at heart with the Allies. From England's White Book and France's Orange Book the press of London and Paris and Petrograd was convinced of Germany's iniquity and Austria's responsibility for the war. From these same books the truth leaped to the eyes of readers in Berlin and Vienna that a conspiracy against civilization had been fomented by Sir Edward Grey and Foreign Minister Sazonof, in spite of the most devoted exertions by the Kaiser to keep the peace of Europe.

You would have said that those many-colored books, with their highly complicated and minute chronology and nomenclature, their dozens of dip-

lomats from half a dozen capitals wiring reports, instructions, concessions, hypotheses, suggestions, temporary proposals, apparently presented a subject for months of careful study and analysis. Yet it is amazing how in the brief space of a few hours between the publication of the book and the going to press of their early editions the editors pierced right to the heart of the truth. A careful though hasty perusal convinced the London *Times* that what it had always said of the Kaiser was so. A mere glance through the pages revealed to the editor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* the secrets of Britain's unscrupulous diplomacy in all their hideous nakedness. These books crystallized opinion with astonishing rapidity and uniformity: pro-German opinion in Berlin, pro-Russian opinion in Petrograd, pro-Ally opinion in London and Paris.

The great mass of us who were neither diplomats nor secretaries for foreign affairs gave more time to the books than the editors did, not having their powers of rapid assimilation, but the effect was the same. A telegram of July 29 from Vienna to London or from Berlin to St. Petersburg showed what we had always suspected, that our sympathies with one side or the other were thoroughly justified. This phase of the war has continued from the first weeks to the present moment, subsiding in intensity after the publication of the first three or four books, rising again when Italy entered the list of Publishing Powers, subsiding once more when the war had gone on long enough and passions had become so deeply rooted and the expenditure of blood and treasure had become so great that it no longer mattered who was right or who was wrong. Every nation had paid a sufficiently heavy price to consider itself in the right.

Simultaneously with the battle of the books there raged the battle of the

professors and the poets. In this Kultur campaign the Germans displayed their characteristic organization, discipline, and determination, but on the whole it was a defensive fight. The assault was delivered by the Allies. It was they who began the attack on Kultur after Louvain, and Professors Ostwald, Haeckel, Wundt, and Lamprecht only counter-attacked. The Allied bombardment was first directed against Fort Bernhardt, as I have shown in a former article. When that position was in a fair way of being demolished and the paper editions of Bernhardt, as I have pointed out, were selling as low as ten cents, the Allied fire was trained against Fort Treitschke. The Germans in Fort Treitschke held out rather well, but the Allies masked that strong position and concentrated the fire of their batteries on Fort Nietzsche. That position is still under siege.

In this battle of Kultur the casualties were tremendous on both sides, in respect to mental integrity, consistency, sense of proportion. It was not merely that men of learning, writers, poets, abandoned old sympathies and old friendships, but the slaughter among ideas was terrific. With the first day of war, the internationalism of the Socialists, the pacifism of the pacifists, went down in wreck. There followed individual disasters, revolutions, surrenders, which showed that men either did not know what they talked about before the war or did not know what they were talking about during the war. The case of Mr. H. G. Wells is to me as significant and as tragic as the fall of Antwerp or the rout of the Russians in Galicia. For, as there is irony in the thought of the anarchist Nietzsche becoming the symbol for militarist Germany, there is irony and pathos in the picture of Wells, the prophet of the scientific conquest of the world, of discipline, forethought, orderliness, throwing him-

self passionately into the war against disciplined and orderly Germany. This man who for twenty years has been preaching against the muddle of modern life as it is lived in England, its lack of purpose, its cowardly compromises, was among the first to raise his voice for the suppression of Germany, for ending the 'tramping, drilling foolery' with which Europe had been filled by the Prussian sergeant. In the face of the dread example of efficiency as made in Germany, Wells suddenly awoke to the consciousness that there are things worth more in life than efficiency, purposiveness, and scientific drill. He awoke to the fact that the disorder of British individualism was something worth fighting for and dying for, and if before this he had intimated anything to the contrary, he virtually cried confession. War stripped Mr. Wells of his science, and revealed him only a man with local passions.

It was sapping tactics that were chiefly brought into play by the Allies in the battle of Kultur. The entire German position was undermined. 'Let us see,' said the Allied scientists, professors, historians, scholars, 'what are the real claims of these German professors, technicians, text-editors, dictionary-makers, and coal-tar specialists, whose authority we have hitherto acknowledged without question, and whose example we have humbly tried to imitate.' And it at once appeared that German science and learning was a Kultur of mediocrity, a middleman, parasitic, sweat-and-grub Kultur, which made its profits by working over the tailings thrown up by the pioneer delvers of other nations, which rushed in its disciplined Teuton hordes only where some great alien had shown the way, which originated little and borrowed everywhere. The roll of the great discoverers and inventors was called and nearly every time it ap-

peared that it was an Englishman, or a Frenchman, or an Italian, or even a Russian, to whom we owed the basic ideas of progress. All of German progress was coal-tarred with the same brush of imitation. Bacon, Harvey, Newton, Descartes, Lavoisier, Faraday, Pasteur, Becquerel, Benedetto Croce, Mendeleef, were found to be the real foundation of German greatness.

In the field of pure science and invention the thing was easily done, because the game of 'I'm first' has always been a favorite one for the jingoes of the academy. Take the telegraph, the steamboat, germs, wireless, radioactivity, — and the truth is, of course, that into every discovery the efforts and attainments of many men of many nations have entered. It is only necessary, therefore, to say that without Branly the Hertzian rays would never have been known; that without Clerk-Maxwell the Germans would never have started, or the other way about; that without this particular German this other particular Frenchman would never have accomplished what he did. The war only popularized the game, gave it a fiercer spirit of rivalry, until Germany was deprived of credit even for Richard Wagner. For Wagner, in the first place, died in 1883, and so is not a modern German, and in the second place he was anticipated by Liszt and Berlioz, and in the third place his music will yield in the course of time to the genius of Johann Sebastian Bach, who was a Saxon, that is, a non-Prussian, if indeed the crown does not belong to Beethoven, who was of Belgian origin and Viennese environment.

On German scholarship Professor Gilbert Murray pronounced the verdict, measured but conclusive. The German classicists — text-editors, dictionary-makers, commentators — have erudition, but lack the higher quality of imagination and feeling. Where a cor-

rupt reading in a Greek author may be rectified by a knowledge of everything every other Greek author ever wrote, we go to the Germans. Where the correction calls for human insight the Germans will not do. 'For anything that can be listed and counted,' said Professor Murray, 'I go to the Germans. For feeling, no.' If you asked Professor Murray how, outside the domain of specialized learning, he could explain away the Germans who have shown capacities for dreaming, imagining, feeling — the romantics, the mystics, the metaphysicians — he would possibly reply that that was just it. Even in those departments of the human soul that allow of neither mensuration nor classification, the German is a specialist. There have been German mystics, poets, dreamers, but their influence has not leavened the great mass of the German nation so as to give imagination to the German editor of Greek texts or feeling to the German classifier of the Amazon fauna. And if you were to mention Haeckel or Ostwald, the answer might be that upon their showing since the war began these men have revealed the limitations of their national character. A professor and a gentleman, a scholar and a poet, — no, sir, they are not made in Germany.

If you sympathize with this short way with the Germans, — and for all the fearful exaggeration to which the point has been pressed, I imagine the case is fairly strong, — you can see why the business of war should have become the great specialty of the Germans. It is a business in which imagination counts for little. Here, too, I suppose there would be no difficulty in proving that the great soldiers, the men who attained the height of genius, were non-Germans. Frederick the Great is not of modern Germany, and in any case he would be overborne by Napoleon, Nelson, Marlborough, Turenne,

Suwaroff. Compared with these men Von Moltke represents just that combination of laboriousness and discipline which is the secret of the triumph of German mediocrity in so many spheres. Yet the fact remains that in war there is no room for academic discussion regarding the relative importance of originality and mediocre application.

In war, results cannot be explained away. If I wish to argue that one Pasteur has done more for science than a thousand German bacteriologists with their microscopes, I may be right or wrong; it is not a practical matter. I am at liberty to say to the Greek editors, 'I don't care if you Germans have written more books on the optative mood; this Englishman has imagination with less knowledge and is my ideal of what a scholar should be. I refuse to warm to your enumerators and classifiers.' You may be right, you may be wrong; it is a matter of choice. You may say to the Germans, 'I don't care for your hundred million dollars of aniline products; an Englishman showed you how'; and you may end the debate with a glow of satisfaction. But when the Germans bring up against you a 42-centimetre gun, when they discharge hydrochloric acid against your trenches, when they spot out your batteries from their Taubes, it is little satisfaction to say, 'You learned how to make guns from the English and aeroplanes from the French, and poison fumes from the Russian chemists. You are not a people of imagination.' When the 42-centimetre gun goes off, when the German range-finders locate your battery, you are dead, and whether it is better to be dead with original imagination or alive through laborious mediocrity, is hardly a subject for debate.

As I write, phase after phase of the great conflict suggests itself, almost without end, and always they are phases of emotion, phases of mind, atti-

tudes, hopes, fears, exultation, depression. There was the period when Germany was to be starved into surrender, and the period when England's empire was on the verge of ruin. There were months when neutrality held us absorbed, the neutrality of Roumania, of the Balkans, of Italy, of the Balkans again, of Roumania once more. There were the days when we lay under the pall of the Lusitania, as dry-wrung of emotions as no event to come can conceivably leave us; it will not yet bear thinking about or writing about. There is the phase which is dominant at this moment of writing, — the munition phase, of which I have already spoken, when everything is forgotten, Kaisers, Kultur, generalship, German persistence, French *élan*, British doggedness, and the war has resolved itself into a question of shells. And once more as I set down the word munitions, it occurs to me how the history of the human mind in this war may be divided and subdivided. For even under the head of munitions I might go back to the beginning and point out how we lived through a 42-centimetre period, a 75-millimetre period, a shrapnel period, a hand-grenade period, an asphyxiating-gas period.

But there is one psychic phase of the war which rose to consciousness after the first weeks, which maintained its poignancy throughout the vicissitudes of months, and which, though not so often talked about now or written about, needs only be mentioned to reassert its grip on our hearts. This is the sorrow of Belgium. Though the end of the war may bring about the reconstruction of Europe, though empires may fall and nations lose their existence, the great chapter in the chronicle as it will present itself to the men of the future will be the story of how Belgium suffered. After a year of war, and ten million men in the casualty

lists, and dramatic swayings of the battle line across ruined countrysides, — Flanders, Galicia, the blood-soaked plains of Champagne; after Zeppelin and submarine, yes, even after the Lusitania, which to so many of us came as a lurid precipitant of doubts and opinions, one need only mention Louvain to find the emotional centre of this dreadful year. The treaty of peace may perhaps bring about a clearing of judgment on all other questions, an agreement of minds, a dissipation of misunderstandings. Peace will come presumably on the basis of give and take. But there is one clause on which there can be no compromise between the German mind and the mind of the world, and that is Belgium.

What many of us have said about the limitations of German imagination may be wrong. But the behavior of the German mind with regard to Belgium is something which can never be disposed of in any reconciliation. We may put aside and forget the one mad act in a clean life, the one puerile weakness in a great mind. The invasion of Belgium might be such an act of aberration if it were not for the persistent German apology for the treatment of Belgium. Only it is not apology: it is a sort of puzzled wonder on the part of Germany why the world should feel as it did, as it does, about the sufferings of a

nation. The invasion of Belgium and the violated scrap of paper might have been forgotten and forgiven, but Germany's persistent plaint that she has been misunderstood about Louvain, misunderstood about *francs-tireurs*, about ransoms of cities, cannot be forgotten. If by this time the German mind cannot understand the world's feeling about Belgium, it never will.

And yet the German diplomats at Washington, the consuls-general and consuls and vice-consuls might have let the Foreign Office at Berlin know. I cannot forget Thanksgiving of 1914. If Germany's diplomats had been on Franklin Field when Cornell and Pennsylvania were fighting a minor battle of Kultur last Thanksgiving Day, they might have understood. Between halves of a football game where passions ran high, they would have seen a battalion of boy scouts with large tin basins invading the benches. They were collecting money for the Belgians. There were months when in these United States at church festivals, commercial banquets, football games, class reunions, and strawberry festivals, there was always an intermission — for Belgium. It had become a solemn rite, a religion. If Von Bernstorff had been on Franklin Field last November he would have understood — and perhaps Germany would have understood.

## THE SECRETARYSHIP OF STATE AND MR. LANSING

BY JAMES BROWN SCOTT

LAWYERS are accustomed to look to the first opinion of a newly appointed justice of the Supreme Court upon a question of constitutional law as the test of his fitness for the Supreme bench. It is presumed that the new Justice is familiar with the ordinary questions of law which have arisen in his practice; but the law administered by the Supreme Court is the law regulating, not merely the rights and duties of men and women in their individual capacities, but the rights and duties of states as members of the Union, as measured by the Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land, binding the conscience of the nation, the state, and the citizen. The qualities required by this position are much greater and more exacting than the qualities which confer leadership at the bar and which predicate success upon the bench of the highest court of any state of the Union.

In like manner the people await the action of the President in foreign affairs, in the belief that the qualities, however great, required to handle domestic questions, are not necessarily the qualities which he should possess to handle the delicate, intricate, and embarrassing questions which arise between this country and foreign nations. The President has grown up in an atmosphere of domestic affairs, even if he has not had practical experience in their conduct, and he can secure as members of his cabinet men who have had experience in such affairs and who can therefore advise him as to the wise course

to follow or the policy to devise in domestic matters. But the presidents are few who have grown up in an atmosphere of foreign affairs. The capacity of the President is therefore fairly tested by the understanding he shows of foreign situations, the skill and ability with which he handles them, and his choice of a Secretary of State to conduct the relations of the United States with foreign countries; for, although the Secretary can be said to be in charge of foreign affairs, which in ordinary cases he handles, nevertheless the Secretary of State is subject to the supervision and direction of the President, by whom he is selected and of whose cabinet he is a member; and the President is, in fact as well as in theory, responsible to the country for the policy which the United States pursues in foreign affairs, whether devised in the first instance by the Secretary of State and concurred in by the President, or framed by the President and executed by the Secretary of State.

The President cannot be said always to be a free agent in the choice of his Secretary of State. It has been the unwritten law for the President to appoint as such, at the beginning of his administration, the 'uncrowned leader' of the party or a competitor for the presidency. From this point of view, the secretaryship, always a great and worthy office, is looked upon as a consolation prize to the politician or statesman who, for one reason or another, has not reached the presidency. In the case of a vacancy, as distinguished from



an original appointment, the choice is not regarded as so restricted, and the President is, as a result of experience, so desirous of a capable and competent official that questions of political availability and of political geography are given less weight, and greater stress is laid upon the fitness of the official for the duties which, under the President, he is to perform. A single example from recent history may be cited. President McKinley began his first administration with Mr. John Sherman as Secretary of State, who resigned after serving little more than a year. Following a brief tenure of the office by the Honorable William R. Day, now an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Mr. John Hay was appointed Secretary of State.

On June 8 the Honorable William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State in Mr. Wilson's Cabinet from March 5, 1913, resigned, and on the day following the Honorable Robert Lansing, Counselor for the Department of State, was appointed Secretary *ad interim*, and on June 23 Secretary of State. Mr. Lansing, although a Democrat in politics, was not a leader of his party. He was admittedly competent in matters of international law, although he had not, before assuming his duties as counselor on April 1, 1914, had an opportunity to show it in such a way as to attract the attention of the country. The delicate and critical situation of the foreign relations of the United States evidently led Mr. Wilson to disregard precedent — if he would have been fettered by precedent — and to select the man, all things considered, best qualified to work in harmony with him and to cooperate in the execution of their joint policy, so that the legitimate interests of the United States would not suffer, and the prestige of the country would be neither dimmed nor abated.

A mere outline of Mr. Lansing's career before he assumed the counselorship, on April 1, 1914, shows the opportunities which he had had to fit himself for this position. Mr. Lansing was born at Watertown, New York, October 17, 1864. He graduated from Amherst College in 1886. Three years later he was admitted to the bar, and practiced law with his father, as a member of the firm of Lansing and Lansing. Since 1892, when he was first called upon to serve the government, he has represented the United States in a long series of arbitrations and has appeared as associate counsel, counsel, or agent, oftener than any man now living, before arbitral tribunals or mixed commissions, among which may be mentioned the Bering Sea Tribunal (1892), the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal (1903), the Hague Tribunal for the arbitration of the North Atlantic Fisheries (1910), and the Anglo-American Commission (1911) formed under the agreement of 1910 to settle outstanding claims between Great Britain and the United States. He also acted as technical delegate in conferences with British, Canadian, and Newfoundland representatives regarding a modification of the fisheries award, held in Washington in January, 1911, and April, 1912, and was technical delegate in the fur-seal conference at Washington between representatives of the United States, Great Britain, Russia, and Japan (1911). From time to time, he has acted as counsel for the Mexican Legation, later for the Mexican Embassy and the Chinese Legation, and he has also appeared as counsel for private parties in the prosecution of international claims.

Actions speak louder than words, and facts are sometimes more eloquent than either. It is apparent that positions such as Mr. Lansing had held at the hands of Republican and Demo-

cratic administrations alike, required, and developed as well, three qualities: skill as an advocate, knowledge of international law, and a thorough understanding of diplomacy and diplomatic procedure.

It would seem that this experience and training were calculated to qualify him for the position of counselor; and Mr. Lansing's success in this position during a period when as counselor he was intimately associated with the Secretary of State and bore a conspicuous part in the conduct of the department relieves us from the necessity of conjecture. He not only met the duties of the office and performed them with tact and loyalty to his chief, but he caused the position of counselor to be known, honored, and respected throughout the length and breadth of the United States, to such a degree that his appointment as Secretary of State appeared rather as the continuance of duties already incumbent upon him and successfully performed, than as the assumption of other and more responsible duties, imposed upon him by the newer and the greater office.

The fitness of a person for the secretaryship of state results from a combination of various elements. That he should be able to handle the business of the department need only be mentioned, as this requirement is so clear that, to use the happy phrase of Lord Mansfield, it can only be obscured by argument. He should be versed in international law and in the practice and procedure of diplomacy, and should have a firm grasp of the foreign policy of the United States. These are the obvious requirements of the office, but others there are, not less necessary, although more subtle and less tangible, and more easily felt than stated and defined. The Secretary should be both easy and dignified in bearing: easy, so as to put the visiting diplomat at ease;

dignified, so as to prevent an undue liberty. He should be sympathetic, so as to court a free expression of views on the part of the diplomat, yet sufficiently reserved, so that a failure to reciprocate may not be regarded either as an unfriendly act or as a mark of opposition. He should know men and men should know him; and he should be able to cooperate with men, just as men should be able to work in harmony with him. It is well that he be familiar with other peoples, that he should have visited the foreign countries where they reside, and that he should know them from personal contact. The attainment of justice should be his aim, whether the principles of justice commend or condemn the proposed policy of the government.

It may be admitted that these are severe requirements. But the circumstances of 1915 — the world at war and in a welter of blood — are indeed extraordinary circumstances. Mr. Wilson was not embarrassed by precedent and was free to appoint as secretary the person who, in his opinion, best met the requirements of the position. He did so, and the approval with which Mr. Lansing's appointment was received by the press of the country and by the public at large was at least a present justification of the President's choice. It is not, however, the approval of the moment but that of the future that counts; and the approval so generously given in advance must be based upon Mr. Lansing's training for the position and upon his experience in the office of counselor, which justified, if it did not dictate, his appointment as Mr. Bryan's successor.

Diplomats have keen eyes and, when not engaged in the performance of their official duties, they not infrequently have sharp tongues. Their unofficial comment is often more enlightening — as it is generally more entertaining —

than their formal and official statements. A distinguished English judge once said that a little truth leaks out even in the most carefully prepared affidavit. This is especially true of the Diplomatic Corps at parade rest. The unofficial views of diplomats are often their real ones, and it is common knowledge in Washington that the diplomats as a whole were genuinely pleased with Mr. Lansing's appointment; for they saw that he possessed the qualities which are considered to be those of an ideal secretary.

As one accustomed to meet men and to find pleasure in their society, the Secretary should meet the Diplomatic Corps, not as one above them or beyond them, but as one of them, a colleague, a fellow worker in the field of international relations, and as eager as they are supposed to be to introduce into the conduct of nations those principles of justice and of fair play which have approved themselves between man and man. In such a country as ours the government is subordinated to law; and it is natural that an official trained in this atmosphere of law and subordination to it should desire to see the relations of nations conform to international law, which, as the law of the society of nations, should and must in the long run control their conduct. It is to be expected that an American Secretary of State should endeavor so to develop the law of nations as to make it responsive to the needs of nations. 'Justice,' said Mr. Webster, one of Mr. Lansing's most eminent predecessors, 'is the great interest of man on earth'; and Mr. Root laid it down as a rule, when Secretary of State, that we should not only observe justice in our relations with foreign nations, but that we should be just; that is to say, that we should never ask of them what we would not readily grant if the circumstances were reversed, — which is but

another way of stating the golden rule, which Mr. Hay regarded as the foundation of diplomacy.

The lawyer is the servant of the law; the Secretary of State should be the servant of justice. His mind should be well stored, but it should be an open mind. But no charm or grace of manner, no gift of telling speech, no amount of sympathetic consideration for the views of others can, singly or collectively, take the place of character. The word of the Secretary should be, not as good as his bond, it should be his bond; and his character should be so above suspicion that his mere statement should refute an accusation, just as when Lord Althorp in the House of Commons replied to an able and bitter charge of an opponent by saying that he had collected some figures which entirely refuted it, but that he had lost them. Mr. Lansing is an essentially just man. His character is stainless and above reproach, and in his official intercourse, as in private life, he gives the impression of high-mindedness, because he is in fact, and is known to be, a high-minded man and a Christian gentleman.

If it be asked why did this reserved and modest, kindly, and courtly gentleman give up the practice of law at Watertown, where his father was in good practice and where his own success was assured, the answer is that his marriage in 1890 to Miss Eleanor Foster, the daughter of Mr. John W. Foster, a distinguished diplomat and within two years thereafter a no less distinguished Secretary of State, brought him into the atmosphere of foreign relations and determined his career; and it is only fair to say that Mrs. Lansing has helped him to make the career which their marriage determined.

That Mr. Lansing will, as Secretary of State, be successful in handling the questions of law and of fact which are

likely to arise during his tenure of office is manifest by the success with which he has handled such questions as Counselor for the Department; that he possesses the qualities which create and sustain confidence, that he has the tact which marks the diplomat and the loyalty which should — but does not always — characterize the diplomat, is evidenced by his relations both with the President and with Mr. Bryan when Secretary of State. Consulted by the President, he was careful to ascertain the views of the Secretary and to represent him in his interviews with the President. When commended by the press, which often attacked the Secretary over the Counselor's shoulders, Mr. Lansing's loyalty was so transparent as never to be questioned. That he possessed and possesses the confidence of his predecessor, Mr. Bryan, we know on the authority of Mr. Bryan himself, who on June 24 wrote the following letter to Mr. Lansing and printed it in *The Commoner* for July: —

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: —

Allow me to extend to you my cordial congratulations and to let you know how much gratified I am that you have been selected as my successor. The year during which we have been

associated together in the State Department has given me an opportunity to become intimately acquainted with you, and confidence and affection have followed acquaintance.

May every success attend you, personally and officially.

Mrs. Bryan joins me in kindest regards to Mrs. Lansing and in good wishes for you both.

With assurances of respect, I am, my dear Mr. Secretary,

Very truly yours,

W. J. BRYAN.

Mr. Wilson is to be congratulated upon securing the services of a colleague with whom he can work in perfect harmony, as the experience of the past year and more has shown. The country is likewise to be congratulated, because it also knows from the experience of the past year and more that Mr. Lansing is competent to handle the gravest and most delicate questions arising out of the great war, because he has handled these questions since its outbreak. The rare combination of character and loyalty, of ability and tact, suggests that both the President and the country will find in Mr. Lansing a competent public servant and an ideal Secretary of State.

## THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

### THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE IRRESPONSIBLE

WOODROW WILSON has been dubbed, in some quarters, 'the psychological President.' This is in ironical reference to his belief that the subtle agency called confidence, which is needed to set the wheels of productive industry a-whir after their long rest, is more a matter of the state of the public mind than a fabric built on visible and palpable facts. Nearly every critic seems to have forgotten that the same belief was entertained by the late John Pierpont Morgan, who certainly would not be classified as an impractical idealist. A modified phase of it came out in his testimony at a Congressional hearing several months before his death, where he stated his conception of the real basis of credit. It surprised a multitude of people to learn, for instance, that a man of his business experience and acumen was ready to set his judgment of human nature far ahead of any mere inventory of negotiable securities, in determining the question whether an applicant for a large loan ought to be accommodated.

Yet not a few of those to whom this conceit appeared so novel are showing every day, by their own conduct, how little they regard the purely material standards of responsibility. The chief difference between them and Mr. Morgan, indeed, is that he put his esteem for the character of a specific individual here and there above any accounting of that individual's resources, whereas they walk through life with a sort of blind faith that, because a majority of the men and women with whom they

come into frequent contact appear to be honestly trying to do right, the presumption of good motives and a sense of duty should extend to all mankind.

If it were not for some such notion lying in the back of his mind, what a terrifying thing would a railway trip or a sea-voyage be to the average traveler. Not once in a thousand times, it is safe to say, does he know personally the man who runs the engine that is drawing him hither and yon. The dispatcher who starts a train, the signal-man in a tower where tracks cross, the captain who commands his vessel, the light-keeper on a dangerous reef, are strangers to him. He does not know their names, or ages, or antecedents. Any dereliction on the part of one of them would imperil, not only immense values in property, but human lives by the hundred. They receive wages out of which they cannot hope to save even a modest fortune; yet if one were open to a bribe, he could make himself rich in a night. Let a capitalist cause damage to your purse or your person, and you can reach him through the courts and compel him to make good to you as much of the injury as can be estimated in dollars and cents; but from the wage-earner who has no assets subject to levy you are unprotected, except by his realization of his duty and his desire to do it.

Even where there is no moral question immediately involved, but bare carelessness might work incalculable harm, we are daily entrusting 'our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor' to the keeping of what, in the familiar parlance of the streets, would be described as the irresponsible class.

Letters which will do as well if they reach their destination next week as tomorrow, we leave in charge of a postman who has at least been subjected to certain civil-service tests as to his good repute and general intelligence; but if time-saving is of great importance, we make use of the special-delivery device or we telegraph. In either event, our communication makes the last stage of its journey in the custody of a boy who follows the calling of a messenger only because, through immaturity, poverty, lack of education, or some kindred handicap, he has been unable to prove his fitness for a better one; while a telegram runs also the initial risk of inaccurate transmission, possibly a complete reversal of its meaning. True, we can hold a telegraph company accountable in damages for a pecuniary loss suffered through such fault of an operator, whether due to his defective skill, or to his being worn out by overwork, or to any other cause, however innocent morally; but a misleading business report, or a garbled item of family news at a critical moment, may inflict a mortal shock on the recipient or dethrone his reason, and no satisfaction for an injury of that magnitude could be obtained from mulcting the offender's employer.

Taken acutely ill in the midst of a long journey, we accept the ministrations of a fellow traveler whom we have never seen before but who says that he is a physician. Even the prescription given us by our family doctor is liable to be filled by an unknown compounding-clerk, yet we swallow unquestioningly whatever he hands us in bottle or box. We hail a passing cab to take us to our destination in the middle of the night, feeling no alarm lest the driver be in league with a gang of foot-pads. We send our cash deposit to the bank by the hand of a messenger concerning whose virtues we have no

guaranty beyond the fact that thus far we have not found him light-fingered. We add our names to this and that petition, on the say-so of some one who may or may not, for all we are aware, have an ulterior and illegitimate interest in swelling his list; and we sign letters and other documents which we have only hurriedly skimmed over in their final draft, and in which our tired copyist may have embalmed an error fatal to our purpose.

Worse yet, we take strangers into our homes as servants, fully conscious that a recommendation by which we lay great store may have been wrung unfairly from a former master who is habitually too easy-going to note or too soft-hearted to disclose the shortcomings of his working people. No matter how well-meaning, the cook may be ignorant enough to poison us twenty times a week without suspecting it; the housemaid may be too scatter-brained to reflect that she must not leave loose papers in front of an open fire which is bombarding the floor with sparks; the children's nurse, though amiable of disposition, may have no more conception of what a baby's spine is like than she has of the differential calculus. Yet the years come and go, and we live on in smug content with ourselves and everything under our roof, as if, because yesterday's sun set in no cloud-bank of disaster, tomorrow's will take its course through a firmament quite as clear of troubles due to over-trustfulness.

Is n't there a lot of 'psychology' in all these commonplace confidences of ours?

#### AN' HIM WENT HOME TO HIM'S MUVVER

I AM the happy possessor of a small goddaughter, a little person of some three years, who is insatiably fond of



stories. She prefers to have them told to her, but failing that, she will tell them herself. One of her favorite stories begins, 'Once 'ere was a lil' boy, an' him went out on a bee's tail.' I suppose what the little boy really went out on was a bee's trail; but to go out on its tail would certainly lead one to expect a much more unusual, not to say poignant, adventure.

I am not now concerned, however, with the beginnings of her stories, but rather with their invariable ending, which is always, 'An' him went home to him's muvver.' Bears, lions, tigers, even elephants and crocodiles, pass through the most agitating and unusual adventures, — adventures which, as a German acquaintance phrases it, 'make to stand up the hair,' — but in the end they all go home to their mothers. Is not this a far more satisfactory conclusion than the old impossible fairy-tale one — 'And so they married and lived happily ever after'?

'An' him went home to him's muvver.' What a port, after stormy seas! How restful — how soul-restoring — how human!

An astonishing bit of wisdom to be evolved by a little person of three! And does it not embody a deep truth which has come down to us from the gray dawn of Time, preserved in many an old myth? One remembers Antæus, for instance, whose strength was always renewed every time he touched his mother Terra, the earth. But my goddaughter's formula is matched by a far more wonderful story. One of the most often recounted adventures of her heroes is, 'An' him ate a lot of can'y an' got very sick, an' *ven* him went home to him's muvver.' — 'I will arise and go to my Father —' Is not hers an exquisite baby version of the Prodigal Son? And has not her little tongue expressed a deep need felt by us all?

Just what I mean by a going-home

to one's mother in this larger sense, is perhaps a little difficult to define. Yet, surely, it must be a very universal experience. Have we not all at some time — often following a period of confusion and stress of circumstances — suddenly experienced that deep sense of finding ourselves where we belonged? A sense of restfulness, of home-coming, of general rightness, and well-being? It is a sloughing off of the non-essential and the trivial, and a shifting of the spirit into deeper and simpler channels; a pause, when in the midst of all this mad dance of time and circumstance one gets a sudden, enlarging glimpse of Truth and of Eternity.

I have been home to my mother very many times, and by very many different paths. Sometimes by way of books, when I have stumbled upon a revelation of thought which presses open spiritual doors; sometimes by way of familiar music; again, and perhaps most often of all, led home by Dame Nature, my hand in hers.

Every spring there is a going-home to my mother for me, when as May swings into her perfumed place among the months she finds me returned to a well-loved little corner of the world. There I am faced by the wide sweep of mountains which I have known always. I wander up and down long, familiar paths, dig in old flower-borders, and greet old friends. The trivial and ephemeral accumulations of the city winter melt away in this genial atmosphere of out-of-doors, but what has been gathered of permanence, the spirit takes up and knits into its being. All the spinning confusion of life is tranquilized and for a little while the soul kneels down in obedience to that world-old command, 'Be still and know that I am God, the spirit of Truth within thee.'

Ah! these Heaven-sent periods, when the littlenesses of Time are swept away

in a great in-rushing realization of Eternity!

Out of the past I recall one such glorified moment. It comes back to me only in fragmentary memories, and yet the essentials are all there. I remember first a confused, hot, somewhat disorganized kitchen. Unexpected visitors had arrived just at supper-time, and there was bustle and haste and some apprehension lest the larder should fall short. I remember hurrying out across the back yard to the store-room, and then, all at once, out there in the wide, soft darkness, I remember I stood still. The heat and confusion of the kitchen were almost in touch of me, and yet were infinitely far away. For an instant, I was removed into an overwhelming peace. I remember whispering through the dark and stillness, childishly enough, no doubt, 'Are you there, little soul?' Afterwards I went swiftly on my errand, and presently was gathered back into the kitchen's confused bustle. But now all was changed. For that glorified instant out there in the dark I had touched bottom. I had been 'home to my mother.' A sordid way of return, the reader may think; and yet, does not much of the best in life flower out of its small, apparently sordid, necessities?

But what was this return? Nothing was apparently changed by it, and yet

everything was really changed. It was a spiritual revaluation; a showing up of temporal things in the light of things eternal.

There comes a time for all of us when we are met by the need of such revaluation. Surely the world is faced now by as crucial a need as it ever knew. Very terrible situations are starting up before us. In fourteen breathless, poignant months the old comfortable ways of half the world have been trampled into blood and destruction. We stand still, appalled, asking ourselves how we may meet these overwhelming catastrophes. I answer in all seriousness and with a deep conviction that it can be done only by going home to our mother. Only those of us can withstand the awful present who have the ability to enter into spiritual sanctuaries. Only the things of the spirit can shelter us; only our souls the big guns cannot blow to atoms. Health and wealth, ease, prosperity, security, where are they now? Ask Belgium. Ask Poland. Nay, ask half mankind.

'Be still and know that I am God, the spirit of Truth within thee.' Oh, little goddaughter, this is the real going home to one's mother. I can ask no more golden talisman for you to hold fast, through all the years to come and on into eternity, than this magic gift of the spiritual return.

